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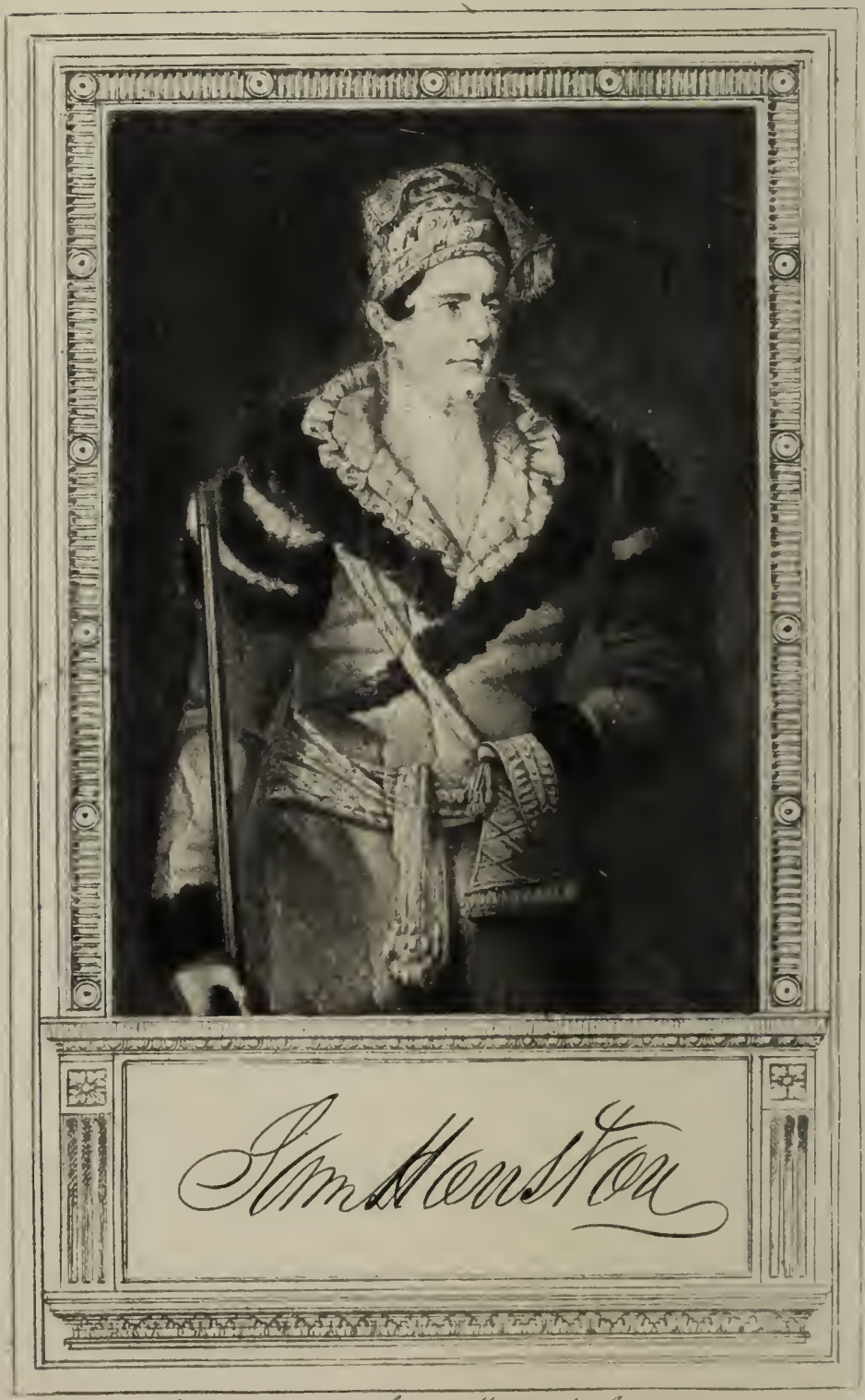
SAM HOUSTON

BY

SARAH BARNWELL ELLIOTT



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THE Beacon Biographies OF Eminent Americans

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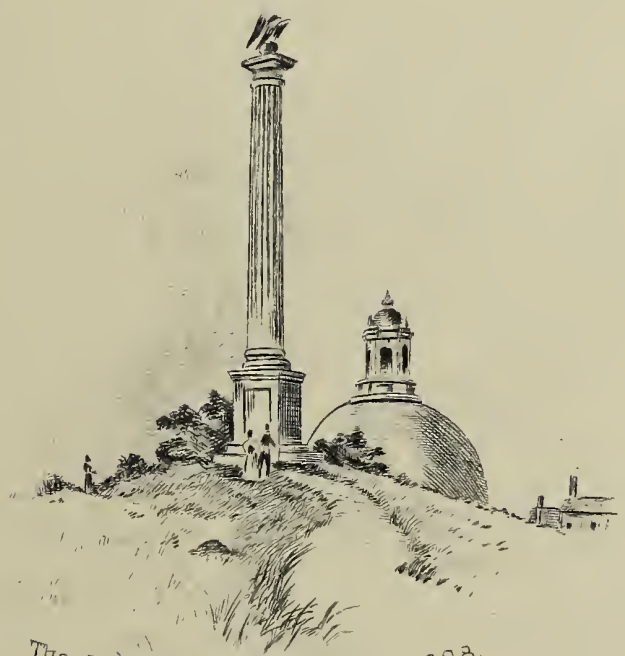

The Summit of Beacon Hill, 1808.

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BOSTON

SAM HOUSTON

BY

SARAH BARNWELL ELLIOTT

BOSTON
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1917

The photogravure used as a frontispiece to this volume is from a photograph by Rockwood of a portrait in the possession of Dr. Warren Coleman, New York.

To the memory of my brother

The Right Reverend

ROBERT WOODWARD BARNWELL
ELLIOTT,

A faithful friend and Bishop of Texas.

PREFACE.

The life of General Houston was so full, so varied, so interwoven with public affairs, that it has been exceedingly difficult to give in such small space even an outline of his career. In this sketch I have quoted freely from the many writers who have so ably handled this period of history. But especially must I acknowledge my obligations to the histories of Texas by Mr. H. Yoakum and Mr. John Henry Brown; to the most admirable and careful study, "Sam Houston and the War of Independence in Texas," by Mr. Alfred M. Williams, a work so complete in its scope that all who follow must turn to him for help; also to the "Reminiscences" of Mr. Ashbel Smith, General Houston's own testimony in Mr. Crane's Life of him, and Mr. Henry Bruce's biography in "The Makers of America" series. These, with notes sent me by Judge John M. Lea, have been my chief helps; and I am glad to thank them as publicly as may be.

It gives me great pleasure, particularly, to thank Judge John M. Lea, of Nashville, for careful and valuable information which I could not have found elsewhere, since it was his personal knowledge of the subject in hand; General George Gillespie, U.S.A., Dr. Warren Coleman, and Mrs. Gertrude Wilson, for information throwing light on General Houston's character; Mr. Elihu Chauncey, for valuable papers; and, once more, Judge Lea, for letters from the "Tennessee Historical Magazine."

It is very seldom that a question has but one answer. And all the questions concerning General Houston and his time seem to have had not only many answers, but many vexed answers. If Houston had failed at San Jacinto, he undoubtedly would have been labelled "Filibuster"; and yet a careful examination by no means proves this. He was what is now called an "Expansionist," and the battle of expansion being fought to-day was fought just as violently in 1803, 1806, 1819, 1844; and the same

political obloquy has been in each case the crown of the expansionist.

The campaign ending in the battle of San Jacinto was without strategic complications, the plan of the only battle extremely simple; but the conclusion stamps both as wise. "The most accomplished soldier could have done no more." It has been good, also, to realize that in the midst of financial opportunity and suggestion — I will not dishonor General Houston by saying temptation — a poor man, as Houston was, could remain so absolutely clean-handed. He spent and was spent freely; but he left the public service in 1861 as poor as when he entered it as a young soldier in 1813. A fair crown for a long life.

SARAH BARNWELL ELLIOTT.

SEWANEE, TENN.

CHRONOLOGY.

1793

March 2. Sam Houston was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia.

1806

Death of father. Family moved to Tennessee.

1813

Enlisted in United States Army. Wounded in battle of Horseshoe Bend. Attracted notice of General Andrew Jackson. Promoted third lieutenant.

1814

Retained in First Infantry, when army was reduced.

1816

Detailed for extra duty as sub-agent to Cherokee Indians. Took delegation of Indians to Washington.

1818

March 1. Promoted first lieutenant.
May 17. Resigned.

1818 (*continued*)

Began study of law in Nashville, Tennessee.

1819

Opened law office in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Elected district attorney in October. Returned to Nashville.

1820

Appointed adjutant-general State of Tennessee, with rank of colonel.

1821

Elected major-general of State troops.

1823

Elected representative to Congress.

1825

Re-elected to Congress.

1826

Fought duel with General William White.

1827

Elected governor of Tennessee.

1829

Candidate for second term. Married Miss Eliza Allen in January. Resigned governorship in April. Joined Cherokee Indians in Arkansas.

1830

Went to Washington in behalf of Indians. Made application to supply Indian rations.

1831

Issued proclamation to all his slanderers.

1832

Returned to Washington. Caned Stanberry. Trial. Went to Texas in December on mission from President Jackson to Comanche Indians at San Antonio de Bexar.

1833

Invited by citizens of Nacogdoches to remain. Elected to convention at San Felipe. Chairman of committee to draft constitution for Texas.

1835

Revolution in Mexico. Texas left without government. Houston joined war party in Nacogdoches. Offered resolutions in opposition to military rule. Elected commander-in-chief in East Texas. Joined Austin at San Antonio. Left to attend convention. On Committee of Declaration setting forth causes of war. Elected commander-in-chief.

December 12. Issued proclamation.

December 25. Moved headquarters to Washington on the Brazos. Appointed commissioner to treat with Indians.

1836

Went to Goliad. Sent Bowie to Bexar.

January 17. Went to Refugio. Superseded by council. Reported to governor.

March 1. Convention met. Houston re-elected commander-in-chief.

Went to Gonzales. Retreated to the Colorado. Reached the Brazos.

April 12. Crossed.

1836 (*continued*)

April 19. Crossed Buffalo Bayou at Harrisburg.

April 21. Battle of San Jacinto. Wounded.

Went to New Orleans.

July 5. Returned to Texas.

Elected president of Texas.

1837

Announced acknowledgment of Texan independence to Congress. Annexation declined by United States.

1838

Retired, leaving everything in good order. Lamar second president. Reversed Houston's policy.

1839

Member of Texas House of Representatives.

1840

Married Miss Margaret Moffett Lea, of Alabama.

1841

Re-elected president in December for second term.

1842

Renewed proposition for annexation. Mexicans plunder San Antonio. Extra session of Congress. Vetoed bill offering dictative powers. Second expedition from Mexico. Sent army to pursue.

1843

Annexation again declined. Withdrew Texan minister. Minister sent back to United States.

1844

Last term ended. Rigid economy left Texas solvent.

1845

Texas annexed. Houston elected senator to the United States.

1846

March 30. Took his seat as senator.

1854

Became a member of the Baptist church.

1856

Spoken of for President.

1857

Defeated for re-election to Senate. Defeated for governor of Texas.

1859

February 26. Delivered his last speech in Senate.

Elected governor of Texas.

December 21. Inaugurated.

1861

Refused to take oath to Confederate government when Texas seceded. Deposed. Protested, and retired with his family to Independence, Texas.

1863

July 26. Sam Houston died at Huntsville, Texas.

SAM HOUSTON

SAM HOUSTON.

I.

THERE is pathos in the picture of Aaron Burr — decrepit, ostracized, dying — reading of the victory of San Jacinto, and crying out, "I was thirty years too soon!"

The dream of that unexplored, mysterious, alluring "South-western Empire" was a fatal one. For it La Salle had been murdered, John Sevier had been suspected, Aaron Burr had been ruined. Sam Houston, a man of his time and environment, whose imagination had been chastened; a man who was willing to fight the devil with fire; who worked warily and shrewdly with whatever material came to hand; who understood perfectly the people he was determined to lead, and led them successfully — he it was who grasped at last the illusive prize, grasped it, and held it, until, an old man, his people called

to him from out the council chamber — "Sam Houston! Sam Houston! Sam Houston!" — to lead the country he had moulded, out from the position he had won for her, into the untried paths of Secession. For once he did not answer his people, and they left him.

At the time of Burr's failure, 1806, the widowed mother of Sam Houston was moving from Virginia to Tennessee, where Sam, just thirteen years of age, began his turbulent career by running away to the Indians. The family was of Scotch descent, and had the right to a coat-of-arms. John Houston settled first in Philadelphia, moving later to Virginia. Samuel, grandson of John, married Elizabeth Paxton, and served in the Revolution. He dying in 1806, his widow sold the Virginia farm, and with her children moved down to the border State of Tennessee. Here Sam, a country boy, as other country boys, had few advantages; and these he put

aside in favor of the Cherokee Indians, who lived about eight miles from his home. When his elder brothers found him, he declined to return with them; and it was not until his clothes were worn out that he came back to his mother to be refitted. After this he divided his time between his home and the Indians, until, finding himself in debt, he opened a school in the white settlement, and not only succeeded as a schoolmaster, but raised the tuition from six to eight dollars a year, paid in equal amounts of "corn, money, and variegated cotton cloth." Unfortunately, the curriculum of this school has not been preserved.

In 1813 Houston enlisted in the United States army, and served under Andrew Jackson against the Creek Indians. His fine courage in the battle of Horseshoe Bend brought him to the notice of Jackson. A comrade, trying to scale a stockade, was shot. Houston took his place,

and was the first over. He received an arrow in the thigh, which he could not pull out. A companion trying and failing twice, Houston cried, "If you don't do it, I'll kill you!" The third pull brought it. The Indians, driven to a stand in an underground intrenchment, had to be unearthed. Again Houston made a reckless dash. Down the narrow entrance he charged, and fell with two bullets in his shoulder, one ranging round into his back. Nobody had followed, and he was dragged away as mortally wounded.

Thought to be dying, his wounds received little attention; and he was cared for chiefly by his fellow-officers, reaching his mother's home nearly two months after the battle, so worn that she scarcely recognized him. When the army was reduced to a peace footing, Houston was retained, having been promoted second lieutenant.

In November, 1816, he was detailed

on extra duty as sub-agent to his old friends, the Cherokee Indians. I am so fortunate as to be in receipt of private letters written from personal knowledge; from these I quote, and shall quote hereafter. "He was very popular with the Indians, and became a great favorite with chief Jolly, who lived on the large island at the junction of the Hiwassee and Tennessee Rivers, now known as 'Jolly's Island.'" During this winter Houston conducted a delegation to Washington. While sub-agent, he had tried to stop the smuggling of African negroes from Spanish Florida into the border settlements. When he arrived in Washington, he found himself accused of complicity in this trade. But his first offence was that, being an officer on duty, he appeared before the Secretary of War, Mr. Calhoun, in Indian costume. For this he was reprimanded. For the other charges he came before President Monroe and Mr. Cal-

houn, and successfully cleared himself. But his treatment had angered him; and, after bringing his Indians home again, he resigned from the army, having just been promoted first lieutenant.

It was May, 1818, that, having been a "first-rate soldier," he resigned, and went to Nashville to study law. At the end of six months he passed the required examinations, and began to practise in Lebanon, a town near Nashville. He rented an office for one dollar a month from Mr. Golladay, merchant and postmaster, who also credited him for clothes and postage, and "recommended him to his friends." Houston's bad health, because of his wounds, had consumed his army pay, and he was in debt; but he so gained favor in Lebanon that within the year he had paid all that he owed, and in October, 1819, was free to return to Nashville, where he had been elected district attorney.

Dramatic entries and exits seemed to

be characteristic of Houston. So at Lebanon, Mr. Bruce tells us, he mounted the court-house steps to say good-by. "Gentlemen," he began, "the time has come when I must bid you farewell. Although duty calls me away, yet I must confess that it is with feelings of sincere regret that I leave you. I shall ever remember with emotions of gratitude the kindness which I received at your hands. I came among you poor and a stranger, and you extended the hand of welcome and received me kindly. I was naked, and ye clothed me. I was hungry, and ye fed me. I was athirst, and ye gave me drink." The people were moved to tears. But Houston did not forget; for in 1853, when the son of Golladay fell ill while travelling in Texas, Houston returned all the long-ago kindness.

From the battle of Horseshoe Bend to the end of Jackson's life, he was Houston's friend and patron; and, as Jackson

never made a secret of either his friendship or his enmity, Tennessee soon knew his estimate of Houston. But of and for himself Houston gained adherents. "He made himself very popular with boys, young men, poor people, and servants,—at least, those at my father's house," says my correspondent, "deemed it an honor to wait upon him." His popularity is clearly attested by his rapid rise: 1819, elected district attorney; 1820, appointed adjutant-general of Tennessee; 1821, elected major-general of State troops; 1823, elected representative to Congress, and in 1825 re-elected. It was during this last term that Houston fought his only duel.

The postmaster in Nashville, Mr. Erwin, was an Adams-Clay appointee, which condemned him in the eyes of the Jacksonians; and Houston's criticisms were unsparing. Erwin challenged him, sending his message by "John Smith, or John Smith T., as he signed

himself, a duellist who had killed several men,—of a fine family, and a wealthy man. Houston, on receiving the challenge in front of the Nashville Inn, cast it to the ground, and put his foot upon it. To the surprise of every one, Smith made no assault upon him. Many people—as Erwin was a gentleman—thought Houston's conduct improper. The subject was discussed about the town; and one man, General White, remarked that he had nothing to do with the difficulty, but he thought that Erwin had not been treated with courtesy. Busybodies began to talk, and the remark came to Houston's ears that 'Houston would pass by what White had said about him.' The consequence was that Houston called upon White, and said, 'You criticised my conduct: any message from you will receive my attention.' A challenge followed.'' An ineffectual effort was made to arrest them, Houston escaping

to the house of a friend in the next county. Here he spent the week preceding the duel in practising with his pistol. In the *Field of Honor*, by Mr. Truman, we find these anecdotes of his duelling. The friend with whom he took refuge "owned two small dogs, which he had named respectively Andrew Jackson and Thomas Benton, and who amused their master and his guest by their frequent battles, Houston always betting on Andrew Jackson. On the morning of the duel, which was to be fought at sunrise, Houston was wakened before day by Andrew Jackson barking under his window. He got up at once, and began to mould bullets. As the first one dropped from the mould, a chicken cock crowed. These two things he esteemed good omens, and marked that special bullet on one side for the dog, on the other for the chicken cock, and determined that that should be the bullet for his first fire." White

fell at this "first fire," shot through the body — not mortally — at the hip. Houston started for the State line, which was near; but, White calling him, he returned, and, raising his antagonist, expressed great sorrow for what he had done.

Houston declined many challenges during his life, which says more than anything else can for the estimation in which he was held, not only in Tennessee, but in the wild country that Texas was in his day. He said once, in explaining his declination of a certain challenge: "I objected to it first on the ground that we were to have but one second, and that the man who had brought the challenge. Another objection was that we were to meet on Sunday morning, and I did not think that anything was to be made by fighting on that day. The third objection was that he was a good Christian, and had had his child baptized the Sunday

before. The fourth was that I never fought *down hill*, and I never would. I must at least make character, if I did not lose my life; and therefore I notified him that way. . . . And I will avail myself of this occasion to declare that I never made a quarrel with a mortal man on earth; nor will I ever do anything to originate a quarrel with any man, woman, or child living. If they quarrel with me, it is their privilege; but I shall try *to take every care that they do me no harm.*"

Another challenge he read, then, handing it to his secretary, said, "Indorse this number fourteen, and file it away."

II.

His five years in the army and his two terms in Congress, where "there were giants in those days," had taught Houston many things. "He was a splendid specimen of physical manhood. Tall, dignified, slow of speech, but ready in command of language, graceful in manner, all his actions indicated that he had a good opinion of himself; and I cannot say that he did not sometimes have an air that was somewhat swaggering." Added to this, the duel with White, having as it did the imprimatur of Andrew Jackson, who, it was known, had given him advice as to methods, increased his popularity; and in 1827 Tennessee elected him governor. He gave entire satisfaction both as an administrator and as a man, and the second term was practically his when the unhappy catastrophe which wrecked his life came to him.

In January, 1829, he married Miss Eliza Allen. "But scarcely was the honeymoon over," when Mrs. Houston returned to her parents, and Houston sent in his resignation as governor. The shock was great; and, no reason being given, the world of Tennessee was instantly rent into factions. Mrs. Houston's family were prominent; and Houston's political enemies took this opportunity to attack him, especially as he made no defence, his only word being: "Eliza stands acquitted by me. I have received her as a virtuous, chaste wife; and as such I pray God I may ever regard her." And it was not until after his death that his widow in Texas gave to the world the explanation received from him, that he had discovered that his wife loved some one else. It is said that he married her knowing that she did not love him, but that he did not know that she loved elsewhere. Houston had been over-confident, the

young woman had been over-persuaded by ambitious parents. It was disastrous; and Houston did what seemed to him in that time of pain and humiliation the only thing to do, and also the best thing to do for his wife. He went away, leaving her free to be divorced on the plea of abandonment; and, since calumny was left without contradiction, the most dreadful accusations against Houston were made public.

Friends went with him on the first stage of his journey on a flat-boat bound South. Slowly he made his way to Arkansas Territory, where his old comrades, the Cherokee Indians, were now living, meeting on his journey the brothers James and Rezin Bowie, whom he was to know again in other scenes. From Little Rock he wrote to President Jackson, whose letter of reply shows that from the first day of Houston's wanderings wild stories were rife, and that Jackson had heard these rumors long

before Doctor Mayo, of Washington, had reported his discovery — a mare's nest — of a conspiracy, organized by Houston, for the capture of Texas. In the late summer, Houston reached the Indians. Old Chief Jolly received him kindly; and, when Houston expressed his wish to become one of them, a council was called, where Houston told his story,—"told of the honors he had received from his own people, that an unfortunate marriage had driven him from his State, and that he had come to live with Father Jolly and be one of the Nation."

The Cherokees knew him well, knew his record as a fighter, and admired him. Now they listened to all he had to say. Then "Old Jolly rose, and, after expressing great gratification in seeing Houston again, added: 'But my son has not acted wisely. He should have remained among his people, enjoying his honors, whipped his wife, and made her behave herself.'" In spite of his unwisdom,

however, Houston was formally admitted to Cherokee citizenship; and he tried to forget his disasters in an absolutely reckless life. He was first in everything,—fighting, hunting, drinking. At the army posts of Fort Coffee and Fort Gibson he met some of the officers, and from Fort Gibson he got his letters. Later Houston built a cabin, cleared a field, and married with Indian ceremonies a handsome half-breed woman, Talihina Rogers, whose white ancestor was said to have been an English officer. Houston also traded in groceries, his shop being in a small storeroom attached to his cabin.

The papers, meanwhile, were filled with surmises concerning him. He was a romantic figure, an uncertain quantity; and the wildest reports found credence. In June, 1829, President Jackson, answering Houston's letter from Little Rock, writes: "It has been communicated to me that you had the ille-

gal enterprise in view of conquering Texas; that you had declared that you would, in less than two years, be emperor of that country by conquest. I must really have thought you deranged to have believed you had so wild a scheme in contemplation, and particularly when it was communicated that the physical force to be employed was the Cherokee Indians. Indeed, my dear sir, I cannot believe you have any such chimerical, visionary scheme in view. Your pledge of honor to the contrary is a sufficient guarantee that you will never engage in any enterprise injurious to your country that would tarnish your fame."

Living with them, Houston found that the Indians were systematically swindled by the agents; and in 1830 he went to Washington to report these outrages, and succeeded in having several agents dismissed. After this, backed by New York capital, he bid for the contract to

furnish rations to the tribes beyond the Mississippi. His bid was eighteen cents a day for each Indian, and he guaranteed good flour and sound meat. Jackson was anxious to give him the contract, but the outcry raised over his bid by the Indian ring was too great. The offer was declined, and Houston returned to Arkansas by way of Nashville.

Feeling concerning the broken marriage ran very high in Tennessee; and the news of Houston's visit to Washington where Jackson was President, and where many Tennesseeans were in office, roused suspicion that Houston was bidding for public sympathy. And the friends of Mrs. Houston in Sumner County worked themselves into such a state of indignation as to call a public meeting to adopt resolutions "vindicating Mrs. Houston's character." At this meeting a committee was appointed to prepare a report which was to be given

to the public; and, further, one person wrote a letter to Washington for publication, denouncing Houston, and threatening an "appalling fate" if he should dare to enter Tennessee. The letter was of such a character as to prohibit publication; but it was shown to Houston, and he promptly returned by way of Nashville. No harm came to him, and we find in the *Tennessee Historical Magazine* a letter from him to the Speaker of the Senate of Tennessee in regard to this committee. The letter was dated, "Cherokee Nation, Neosha Wigwam, December 17, 1830."

Things travelled slowly by stage and steamboat in those days; but at last the resolutions of the "Sumner County Committee," which had been "widely published," reached Houston, and he entered his first protest. His indignation was extreme and righteous. He says, "When has society before witnessed the convention of a committee

for the purpose of taking up the *private* and *domestic* circumstances of *private persons*, and in a public and solemn manner reporting thereupon?" From a private letter I quote: "The women of Tennessee were very indignant toward Houston. I recollect that about 1830 or 1831 it was rumored that Houston, who was on a visit to his sister in an adjoining county, would visit Knoxville. The subject was discussed, and my mother said no one should call upon him. She said to me, knowing that I greatly admired him, 'Now, John, do you not go near him.' He arrived that afternoon; and at supper she said: 'The people have little to do to honor such a man. Did you see him, John?' I replied, 'I went to the hotel, and he said, "This is young Mr. ——," and shook me by the hand and inquired of the family.' She chided me, and I was very glad '*the correction went no further.*'"

It must have been during this latter visit that Houston published a comic proclamation in answer to the many newspaper vilifications, offering a prize "To the Author of the most Elegant, Refined, and Ingenious Lie or Calumny" concerning himself. Evidently, he did not realize the cumulative power of slander, nor the ill done him, until he returned to Washington in the spring of 1832. The opposition was, as usual, attacking the party in power, Houston's party; and in the House of Representatives Mr. Stanberry, of Ohio, made himself famous by saying, "Was the late Secretary of War removed in consequence of his attempt fraudulently to give to Governor Houston the contract for Indian rations?" This was published in the *National Intelligencer;* and the next day Mr. Stanberry received a note from Houston, asking if what he had read was true, especially as it had been published out of its

proper sequence. Mr. Cave Johnson, who had delivered this note, received an answer from Mr. Stanberry, saying that he had received a note signed "Sam Houston," asking explanation of words used by him in debate, and that he could not "recognize the right of Mr. Houston to make this request."

In his subsequent testimony before the House, Mr. Stanberry declared that his friends advised him to arm himself; and he provided himself with a "pair of pistols and a dirk." For days Mr. Stanberry carried this armament, and was accompanied by a friend; but, not meeting Houston, he reduced himself to one pistol, and went about alone. Houston meanwhile had begged from a friend a small hickory stick, which he himself had cut at the Hermitage.

It seems to have been a moonlight night; and Houston was talking to Senator Buckner, of Missouri, on a street corner. "Houston was standing not

directly facing the palings, but rather quartering towards it, and quartering to me," was Mr. Buckner's testimony. "Without answering my question, he seemed to shift the position of his feet. I saw nothing at the time, but soon discovered a gentleman coming across the avenue, . . . As he approached nearer, . . . I discovered it to be Mr. Stanberry. It occurred immediately to me that there would be a difficulty, . . . having understood previously that there had been dissatisfaction between them. As Stanberry approached nearer, he appeared to halt in his place. Houston asked if that was Mr. Stanberry. He replied very politely, and bowing at the same time, 'Yes, sir.' 'Then,' said Houston, 'you are the damned rascal,' and with that struck him with the stick which he held in his hand. Stanberry threw up his hands over his head, and staggered back. His hat fell off, and he exclaimed, 'Oh, don't!'" But the caning went on,

Stanberry "hallooing" and carrying Houston about on his back; Stanberry down, with his pistol against Houston's breast, snapping; Houston taking it away, then Stanberry putting up his feet, Houston continuing the whipping until he was tired.

The next morning the Speaker of the House received a note from Mr. Stanberry, stating that he had been waylaid, "knocked down by a bludgeon, and severely bruised and wounded by Samuel Houston, late of Tennessee." Houston was arrested on the ground that attacking a member for words spoken in the House was a "breach of privilege," and a trial began which lasted for a month.

This affair was the culmination of Houston's misfortunes. He had not chosen to make cause of the calumnies concerning his marriage, and did not seem to heed what else was said, save in his absurd proclamation. In 1830 he

had come honestly to point out that the Indian was being swindled. He had considered his bid an honest one, as it was afterward proved to be, Mr. Stanberry himself being on the investigating committee; but his enemies had turned the incident of its declination into a scandal. Returning to Washington and finding that all the calumnies against him had been focussed, and that he was a marked man,—an outcast, not an exile,—his self-control reached its limits. Men knew, however, that face to face Houston was not to be treated with disrespect, so that Stanberry's remark, aimed at the President, as he afterward said, and made in the House, was the "first thing that Houston could nail"; and without hesitation he "nailed" it. Nor did Houston ever feel himself to blame for caning Stanberry. The man had slandered him publicly, and, looking on him as an outcast and friendless, had treated his request for an explana-

tion with contempt; had armed himself, while Houston carried only a walking-stick. And now, brought before the bar of the House, Houston selected Francis Scott Key to defend him.

Whatever Houston elected to be, he was for the time, to himself at least, absolutely that thing. Soldier, governor, Indian chief, exile, boon companion, he was always able to adapt himself to his environment. Now he stood before the "bar of the nation," of sufficient importance to stop the wheels of government; arraigned for defending his good name, and in a measure a martyr for standing silent to protect a woman; he rose to the occasion, put aside all eccentricities, and appeared "elegantly dressed" with a poet for his counsel.

In his own defence, Houston was at his best. "All I demand," he said, "is that my actions may be pursued to the motives which gave them birth.

Though it may have been alleged that 'I am a man of broken fortune and blasted reputation,' I never can forget that reputation, however hunted, is the high boon of Heaven. . . . After having been 'blasted by adversity' and hunted from society as an outlaw, to be libelled for corruption, and charged with fraud on the government, is too much to endure. Though the ploughshare of ruin has been driven over me, and laid waste my brightest hopes, yet I am proud to think that, under all circumstances, I have endeavored to sustain the laws of my country, and to support her institutions. Whatever may be the opinions of these gentlemen, in relation to these matters, I am here to be tried for a substantive offence, disconnected entirely with my former circumstances. I have only to say to those who rebuke me at the time when they see adversity sorely pressing upon me, for myself —

'I seek no sympathy, nor need;
The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted: they have torn me, and I bleed.'"

At the end a resolution was passed that Houston be brought to the bar of the House, and be reprimanded by the Speaker. The rebuke was mild; and, Houston being further convicted of assault and battery, and fined five hundred dollars, President Jackson, who had said openly, "After a few more examples of the same kind, members of Congress will learn to keep civil tongues in their heads," promptly remitted the fine, "divers good and sufficient reasons moving me thereto."

Houston's summing up of the affair was, "I was dying out once, and, had they taken me before a justice of the peace and fined me ten dollars for assault and battery, it would have killed

me; but they gave me a national tribunal for a theatre, and it set me up again."

III.

THE romantic country of Texas, that "new, immense, unbounded world," now became the stage on which Houston's part was to be played to the end, —Texas with her tropic sun and arctic "northers," her clear skies and treacherous rivers, her mud, like black glue, and her miles and miles and miles of spring flowers. In all the world there is nothing more beautiful than spring on the Texas prairies.

The American Revolution, that latter-day chaos out of which the modern order of all the world has come, upset all experience; and the scarcely fledged United States found herself face to face with grave problems. The Old World could reach her through Louisiana, and the Floridas could find the way to her very heart through the mouth of the Mississippi. But Napoleon would sell all of Louisiana or none. In Congress in 1803,

in the debates on this question, the opposition came from the East, Senator Tracy, of Connecticut, saying frankly: "This universal consent I am positive can never be obtained to such a pernicious measure as the admission of Louisiana, of a world, and such a world, into our Union. This would be absorbing the Northern States, and rendering them as insignificant in the Union as they ought to be if by their own consent the measures should be adopted."

This addition, which would endanger the balance of power, extended north to the Lake of the Woods and west to Vancouver's Island, not adding even Texas to the South, though many declared that she was included in these prodigious boundaries. After this, the Floridas. There gathered hostile Indians, runaway slaves, outlaws, and desperadoes,—a death-dealing population which needed to be handled; and this was the beginning in 1817 of the Seminole War, and

of Jackson's famous march as Conquering Hero, which so confused his government. In 1819 a treaty with Spain provided for the cession of the Floridas, making the Sabine River the southwestern boundary of the United States. In his Life of Henry Clay, Mr. Schurz says: "Adams . . . had only reluctantly given up the line of the Rio Grande del Norte, and accepted that of the Sabine. He might have carried his point, had not Monroe, with the concurrence of the rest of the cabinet, desired the Sabine as a boundary for peculiar reasons. In a letter to General Jackson he said, 'Having long known the repugnance with which the Eastern portion of our Union have seen its aggrandizement to the West and South, I have been decidedly of the opinion that we ought to be content with Florida for the present.' It was therefore in deference to what Monroe understood to be North-eastern sentiment that Texas was given up."

In his Memoirs, John Quincy Adams says, "Jackson's passion for the acquisition of Texas was intense." Again, "Jackson proposed anew the purchase of Texas, for which he authorized the offer of five million dollars, while at the same time Sam Houston went into Texas to kindle an internal insurrection, and separate Texas from Mexico."

Jackson's later view was: "Our Western boundary would be the Rio Grande, which is of itself a fortification on account of its extensive barren and uninhabitable plain. With such a barrier on our west, we are invincible."

But, whatever were the views and squabbles of politicians, there was not the least necessity to send any one to kindle anything in Texas. It was all aflame when Houston got there, and had been for some time,—from the day that Louisiana became American territory, and before, expansive Americans had drifted across the border, across the

"Neutral Ground," along the old San Antonio road, into the heart of the country. They were not welcome. They were not wanted. Spain was jealous of the United States. But, when in 1824 Mexico revolted against Spain, the colonists served Mexico well; and after this colonists were begged to come in.

Texas, however, found herself tied to and practically governed by the province of Coahuila, distinctively Mexican. And in 1825 the attempt of the United States, under Mr. Adams, to buy Texas, offering one million dollars, and Mr. Clay speaking of the transaction as the "retransfer of Texas," on the ground that she had been included in the Louisiana purchase, roused in the Mexican government the same jealousy of the United States that had existed at an earlier date in the government of Spain. After this there was an increasing feeling against American immigration, as well as against the progressiveness of

the colonists already established, though things were endurable until 1829, when Spain sent an expedition against Mexico. In the alarm the President was given unlimited powers; and he at once requested the President of Hayti to excite through emissaries the slaves in Cuba to revolt, so to cause trouble for Spain. In consequence he was driven to abolish slavery in Mexico. He modified this emancipation in the case of the American colony.

In 1830, Bustemente, Vice-President, organized a revolution in Mexico, and made himself master of the country, with a new policy for the Americans. He forbade further immigration, suspended all colony contracts, established custom-houses, and stationed Mexican troops at all the principal points. These new laws were first carried out at Anahuac. All the ports except Anahuac were closed, martial law was proclaimed, citizens were arrested, slaves freed, and property

seized. The colonists held indignation meetings, declaring against Bustemente and for the liberal constitution made by Mexico in 1824, under which the colonists had been invited into the country. The United States, under Jackson, now offered five million dollars for Texas, which was refused. Santa Anna now came forward. He excited the army against Bustemente; while the colonists, seeing their opportunity, seized Texas, drove out the troops, and declared for Santa Anna.

In seizing the State, the colonists first realized their strength; and it determined them to have a government distinct from that of Coahuila. They called a convention at San Felipe in October, 1832, to memorialize the general government on this point. This meeting was not satisfactory, and after a week it adjourned; but it had served to put the thought before the people. In Mexico, Santa Anna and Bustemente

came to an agreement. Bustemente's laws were not repealed, however; and the colonists were far from satisfied.

This is the barest outline, the merest hint of what the colonists endured; but, it is enough to show somewhat the condition of things when Houston arrived. He had been receiving letters concerning Texas ever since his departure from Tennessee; for all who knew him regarded him as a leader. John Wharton writes in July, 1829: "I have heard you intended an expedition against Texas. I suppose, if true, you will let some of your Nashville friends know of it. It is stated in the papers and believed generally that Spain is fitting out an expedition against Mexico. . . . Should this be true, I make no doubt but you will join the Mexicans. I certainly will do it." In October of the same year he writes: "I therefore request you once more, to visit Texas. It is a fine field for enterprise. You can get a grant of

land and yet be surrounded by your friends; and what may not 'the coming on of time' bring about? . . . I am now on my way to Texas in company with my brother and his lady, Major Boyd, and Mr. Groce."

These reports spread through the country, at last taking the form that a band of adventurers, led by Sam Houston, was about to descend on Texas. Houston, meanwhile was "dying out," until they gave him a "national tribunal for a theatre." After this — after he had expended his sore feelings, and had stated his case to the world — he seemed once more to wish to take hold of his life. Jackson helped him; and it was on December 10, 1832, a little after the first effort of the Texan colonists to call a convention, and about the time that Bustemente and Santa Anna compromised, that Houston, sent to look into the complaints of the Mexican government as to the Indians who had

crossed into Mexican territory, to examine into the value of Texas in case the United States should buy it, and to investigate some private land claims, crossed the Red River on his way to Nacogdoches.

The condition of the West and South-west in the thirties is to-day incomprehensible; and Mr. Featherstonhaugh's *Excursion through the Slave States* gives a very uncomfortable view of it. To Sam Houston, however, it would not seem as it would to an Englishman; and of Houston's journey we hear little. He parted with the Indians, with Talihina, and rode away on a pony. Two friends went with him some distance; and, on parting, one exchanged beasts with him and the other gave him a pair of pistols. Talihina refused to go with him or to join him when at a later period he sent for her. She "could not leave her people." She died a few years later, and was buried

where she had lived. She had no children.

Houston found but two houses between Jonesborough and Nacogdoches. He spent a few days at Nacogdoches, then went to San Felipe, where he spent Christmas, going later to San Antonio de Bexar in company with James Bowie, "a big man in Texas," whom he had first met on his memorable journey into exile. At Bexar he saw the Comanche chiefs, and returned to Nacogdoches by way of San Felipe, where he met Stephen Austin. At Nacogdoches the people begged him to remain, which invitation he promised to consider after he had made his report to President Jackson, and, through the Indian commissioners, to the Secretary of War. His reports are dated Nachitoches, Louisiana, February 13, 1832.

To President Jackson: "Dear Sir,—Having been as far as Bexar in the province of Texas, I am in possession of

some information that will doubtless be interesting to you, and may be calculated to forward your views, if you should entertain any, touching the acquisition of Texas by the United States. That such a measure is desirable by nineteen-twentieths of the population of the province, I cannot doubt. They are now without laws to govern or protect them. Mexico is involved in civil war. The Federal Constitution [of 1824] has never been in operation. The government is essentially despotic. . . . The rulers have not honesty, and the people have not intelligence. The people of Texas are determined to form a State government, and to separate from Coahuila; and, unless Mexico is soon restored to order, and the Constitution revived and enacted, the province of Texas will remain separate from the Confederacy of Mexico. She has already beaten and expelled all the troops of Mexico from her soil, nor will she

permit them to return. . . . Now is a very important crisis for Texas. . . . If Texas is desirable to the United States, it is now in the most favorable attitude, perhaps, that it can be, to obtain it on fair terms. England is pressing her suit for it. . . . I have no hesitation in pronouncing it the finest country, to its extent, upon the globe. . . . There can be no doubt but the country east of the Rio Grande would sustain a population of ten million of souls. My opinion is that Texas will, by her members in convention on the first of April, declare all that country as Texas proper, and form a State constitution. I expect to be present at the convention, and will apprise you of the course adopted so soon as its members have taken a final action. It is probable I may make Texas my abiding-place. In adopting this course, I will *never forget* the country of my birth."

After making his reports, Houston re-

turned to Nacogdoches, and, accepting the invitation to citizenship, was elected to the convention called for April 1 at San Felipe. This was the second effort of the colonists to form a constitution independent of Coahuila, though remaining one of the Mexican Confederation. In March, down in Mexico, Santa Anna was elected President, and declared for the liberal constitution of 1824, promising that "his administration should be as mild and tolerant as his own character."

When the convention met, Houston was elected chairman of the Committee on Constitution, and David Burnet chairman of the Committee on Memorial. Of course, the constitution was modelled on that of the United States, save that freedom of religion was not mentioned. Houston opposed incorporating banking institutions as unwise, and displeasing to Mexico, and also condemned the importation of negroes from

Africa, which had been going on in Texas since the days of Lafitte. The convention adjourned on April 13, having appointed Stephen Austin and two others commissioners to present the memorial which asked for a separate organization from Coahuila, for a repeal of the law prohibiting immigration, for regular mail service, for protection against Indians, and for regulation of the tariff.

The faithful Austin, whom Houston named the "Father of Texas," alone went to Mexico, where he found the greatest confusion. Santa Anna, having sent Almonte to inspect Texas, was resting at his estate; and Farias, Vice-President, was at the head of affairs. The memorial was reported to a committee, "where it slept." Cholera appearing increased the confusion. Austin could get no hearing; and in October, 1833, in despair, he wrote to the municipal council at Bexar, suggesting that the municipalities in Texas unite,

and organize a State without waiting for permission. While this letter was on the way, he obtained the abrogation of the law prohibiting immigration, and in December, tired and hopeless, set out for home. At Saltillo he was intercepted, taken back, and imprisoned. His letter to Bexar had been returned to the central government, and was considered treasonable.

During this time there is nothing told of the private life of Houston, unless we take a passage from the diary of Mr. Featherstonhaugh (1834), who, in his *Excursion through the Slave States*, says: "We made an agreeable excursion in the neighborhood, calling at the little insignificant wooden town of Washington, where the government land sales were holding. I was not desirous of remaining long at this place. General Houston was here, leading a mysterious sort of life, shut up in a small tavern, seeing nobody by day and sitting up all

night. The world gave him credit for passing these waking hours in the study of *trente et quarante* and *sept à lever;* but I had been in communication with too many persons of late, and had seen too much passing before my eyes, to be ignorant that this little place was the rendezvous where a much deeper game than *faro* or *rouge-et-noir* was playing. There were many persons at this time in the village from the States lying adjacent to the Mississippi, under the pretence of purchasing government lands, but whose real object was to encourage the settlers to throw off their allegiance to the Mexican government. . . . Having nothing whatever in common with these plans, and no inclination to forward or oppose them, I perceived that the longer I stayed the more they would find reason to suppose I was a spy upon their actions, and as soon as the judge had spoken to a few of his friends we came away."

How much of this information given to Mr. Featherstonhaugh was American humor playing upon an Englishman we do not know, but nowhere is there any sign that the colonists made any secret of their discontent or of their determination to change their condition just as soon as it was possible.

In May, 1834, Santa Anna emerged from his retreat, and called for a new congress to make a new constitution. In June he released Austin, but still detained him, knowing that anxiety for him would keep the colonists quiet. They meanwhile, angry and alarmed, had without effect petitioned for his release. In October, Santa Anna at last took up the Texas memorial, and promised everything except a government separate from Coahuila, but ordered a new election for governor and legislature in that province. In a dispute that had arisen as to changing the capital of Coahuila from Saltillo to Monclova, he decided for Monclova.

Austin, still detained, wrote, advising the colonists to accept this adjustment. Almonte making a good report of Texas, the value of that State was much increased in the eyes of the Mexican government. In January, 1835, the Mexican National Congress met. In the elections the Centralists had carried everything before them, save in the States of Zacatecas and Coahuila. Zacatecas, standing by the constitution of 1824, was declared in rebellion. Also, a law was passed reducing the militia, and requiring the remainder to give up their arms. This law the Texans declared to be despotic, especially as their weapons were needed to procure food as well as to protect them against the Indians. The lately elected governor of Coahuila had, in the mean time, illegally disposed of a large amount of Texas lands, which infuriated the colonists; and Saltillo, willing to find anything against the government at

Monclova, withdrew her delegates, and "pronounced."

In April, Santa Anna with an army set out for Zacatecas, sending General Cos to bring order into the disturbed government of Coahuila. Zacatecas was soon overcome; and Cos had no trouble in Coahuila, as the Texans declined to defend a despised governor. The legislature dispersing hastily, the governor fled.

By this time Texas was divided into two parties, one determined to establish a government of their own, the other desiring peace at any price, agreeing only in objecting to a standing army and to customs being collected at their own ports to support it; and the first movement toward war was the driving from the port of Anahuac by the war party of the Mexican troops under Captain Jenorio, which recently had been sent there. The peace party promptly disclaimed this act, and forwarded the

prisoners to the Mexican authorities at Bexar. There were now rumors of the approach of an army. Cos, in command, sent ahead circulars full of liberal promises; but intercepted despatches revealed that the army was to regulate and subdue Texas.

The war party issued stirring addresses. The peace party sent commissioners to Cos, promising to keep the peace if troops were not introduced into Texas. The leaders of the war party were Travis, Bowie, Williamson, and Johnson; and in July Zavalla, governor of the City of Mexico, arrived in Texas, fleeing from Santa Anna. An order coming to arrest Zavalla and the leaders of the war party, fired the whole of Texas. The colonists were now convinced that a despotism had been established, and made a move for a convention of all Texas, to meet at Washington on the Brazos on October 15, 1835. The people of the Redlands had also

organized, and in a series of resolutions offered by Houston in San Augustine the measures of Santa Anna were declared evidences of tyranny. These resolutions provided also for the organization of militia, for treaties with Indians, who were in sufficient numbers to be always a danger, and declared that all who now deserted the country should forfeit lands. In September, Austin at last returned.

About the middle of September, Cos landed at Matagorda. He was to disarm the country, and to expel all Americans who had come in since 1830, driving even the conservative Austin to say, "War is the only resource." Events were hurrying on much faster than Santa Anna desired, and on October 2 the first armed collision took place at Gonzales over a cannon which the Mexican authorities demanded. The town refused its surrender, and troops were sent from Bexar to take it. Before this an

armed force had come together at San Felipe with the intention of intercepting General Cos on his march from the coast; and on the demand for the six-pounder a courier had gone from Gonzales, calling for help. The men at San Felipe went by forced marches. The volunteers from the Colorado and the Brazos hurried to the point of danger. On Tuesday the force at Gonzales was eighteen men; on Wednesday, one hundred; on Thursday, one hundred and sixty-eight. They crossed the Guadaloupe, routed the Mexicans, and returned to Gonzales in the afternoon without the loss of a man. Riders now carried the word from settlement to settlement: that fight had been won, but Ugartechea with five hundred men and artillery was marching on Gonzales! Armed men gathered from every direction. No pay, no rations, nothing but their long rifles, their bowie-knives, and a firm purpose. San Felipe, because of a printing-press

there, was looked on as the centre, and Stephen Austin as the leader. At Nacogdoches, Houston was elected commander-in-chief of Eastern Texas, and by October 10 forwarded an organized company. Ugartechea paused in his purpose, and the Texans made the most of the time. Each township was called to send a delegate; and at San Felipe a council was formed, a president chosen, and Austin was left free to go to the front. The colonists now in force decided that they would march on Bexar, and once for all drive the Mexicans out of the country. All men being required at the front, the convention, which had been called for October, was postponed until November.

In Eastern Texas, Houston had issued a proclamation.

"HEADQUARTERS, TEXAS.
"DEPARTMENT NACOGDOCHES, October 8, 1835.

"The time has arrived when the revolutions in the interior of Mexico have re-

sulted in the creation of a Dictator, and Texas is compelled to assume an attitude defensive of her rights. . . . The priesthood and the army are to mete out the measure of our wretchedness. War is our only alternative. . . . Volunteers are invited to our standards. Liberal bounties of land will be granted to all who will join our ranks with a good rifle and one hundred pounds of ammunition. . . . The morning of Glory has dawned upon us. The work of Liberty has begun. Our actions are to become a part of the history of mankind. Patriot millions will sympathize with our struggles, while nations will admire our achievements! . . .

"SAM HOUSTON,
"*General-in-chief of Department.*"

Adventurers, hunters, traders, farmers,— Austin, Houston, Travis, Bowie, Bonham, Milam, Crockett, Fannin, Deaf Smith,— these men who were making

the history of Texas, who were carrying the United States out to be the keeper of the Gates of the West, were, each in himself, a living romance. None of them knew fear, and few of them lived to see the end.

Austin sent couriers to Houston to summon the Redlanders; and Houston writes, "I gave to the express the only last five dollars I had to bear his expenses east." On the 13th, Austin with three hundred and fifty men marched toward Bexar, camping eight miles below the town. A few days before this a hundred and ten men had marched on Victoria, and fifty men had set out for Goliad. On this latter march, hiding in a mesquit thicket, they stumbled on Ben Milam, who had been imprisoned in Coahuila. Escaping, he had ridden night and day, and now, exhausted, had crawled into the thicket to rest. He promptly joined the party, and marched on Goliad. They went straight to head-

quarters, shot the sentinel, broke open the doors, and captured the commandant. The Mexicans surrendered with one man killed. They captured military stores, artillery, and several hundred stands of arms, besides cutting communication between Bexar and the gulf. Victoria had been evacuated before the Texans got there.

Austin waited for re-enforcements, which arrived in the shape of members of the convention — which, not having a quorum, adjourned to the army; and, a few days later, Houston joined him with troops from East Texas. Austin, not being a soldier, now begged Houston to take command; but Houston declined, declaring his perfect willingness to serve under Austin, who had been elected commander by the troops at Gonzales. Houston did not approve of the attack on Bexar, looking on it as an outpost which they would not be able to hold, and suggested, even then, the concentra-

tion of the army behind the Guadaloupe.

The leaders now realized that it was necessary to organize a government. The matter was submitted to the army, who decided that the delegates, Houston being one, should return to San Felipe. The army now advanced on Bexar. The brilliant little victory of Concepcion, led by Bowie and Fannin, was won; and Austin and his "volunteer combination of freemen," with a fresh directness that must have astonished General Martin Perfecto de Cos and his regular army, demanded the surrender of the town. Cos refused even to receive the demand, and the siege began. The Texans had come to fight, and the dull work of a siege bored them. There was no term of enlistment, no discipline. "Gathered under impulse, they left at pleasure"; and, by November, Austin was uncertain if he could hold the army at all.

At San Felipe the convention met in

a one-roomed house; and, no shelter being provided for the delegates, they slept at night by the side of their picketed horses. Houston appeared in his Indian buckskin breeches and Mexican blanket, his wardrobe, doubtless, being circumscribed; and Andrew Jackson "thanked God there was one man at least, in Texas, whom the Almighty had the making of, and not the tailor." A declaration was drawn up, saying that they had risen against Santa Anna and despotism, but were still faithful to the true Mexican government and the constitution of 1824.

This, however, did not suit the more impulsive, who were anxious for an immediate declaration of independence; and they proceeded to pass a resolution to this effect. Houston, who had drawn up the first declaration, and believed moderation to be the wiser course, made a strong speech which caused the convention to reconsider; and the first dec-

laration was given to the world, where the framers hoped, and wisely, that it would gain sympathy for the colonists. The government was authorized to contract for a loan of one million dollars, on security of public lands, to establish postal service, to arrange treaties with the Indians, and to create a regular army of eleven hundred and twenty men. Henry Smith was elected governor; J. W. Robinson, lieutenant governor; Stephen Austin, Branch Archer, and William Wharton, commissioners to the United States; and Houston, "the man in buckskin," was unanimously elected commander-in-chief of the army — "to be raised."

They adjourned on November 13, to meet again on March 1, 1836, leaving a council selected from the convention as advisory committee to aid the governor. Houston appointed his staff, drew up a plan for the organization of the army, and remained at San Felipe to push it

through, being sure that this was the most important thing to be accomplished.

At Bexar, Colonel Burlison was now in command of the diminishing, dissatisfied army. They did everything possible and daring to entice the Mexicans out of the town. They amused themselves with scouting expeditions, with "catching the spent cannon-balls and throwing them back," with listening to the stories of a Dr. Grant who, owning large estates in Mexico, was sure that Mexico was ready to rise against Santa Anna, and that the Texans needed only to march to Matamoras, to have all Mexico at their feet. In spite of all, the army was melting away, when some Americans, escaping from the town, told them that it could be taken by assault. It was arranged to attack at dawn the next morning. All was ready, when, suddenly, all was postponed. A guide was missing: they were betrayed! They

were ordered hastily to abandon the siege. The men were beside themselves, and bloodshed was threatened when the guide returned. Milam came out of Burlison's tent, and cried, "Who'll follow old Ben Milam into San Antonio?" There was a shout, and three hundred men volunteered.

On December 5 the assault was begun just before day. They fought from house to house, burrowing through walls, rushing across streets, firing from house-tops, fortifying as they went. Milam was killed in a street rush. On the 9th Cos capitulated, and on the 14th marched away; and not a Mexican soldier was left in Texas. It was a gallant deed, and the enthusiasm in the United States was great. All over the country, from New York to New Orleans, funds were raised, and "emigrants fitted out in squads, companies, and battalions."

San Antonio de Bexar had been taken, and Cos had retreated; but

Houston went on with his work. Cos would return; and Houston wrote, "By the rise of grass we'll be on the march." On December 12 he issued a proclamation as commander-in-chief, calling for recruits for both regular and volunteer service. "The first of March next we must meet the enemy with an army worthy of our cause."

But things were awry in the government. The governor and the council were at odds, and disappointed office-seekers were hampering every move. The country and army were full of adventurers, to whose hopes organization was death. There was discontent among the colonists, also, and some jealousy of Houston as a new-comer. There was dangerous discontent at the various military points, where the bodies of idle men had listened to and been persuaded by the stories of Dr. Grant, who had published a proclamation containing his views,—stories telling of the riches of

Mexico and the certainty of the overthrow of Santa Anna, if the people were only encouraged by the advance of the Texan army to Matamoras.

At headquarters the discontent of the soldiers was well known; and a march to Matamoras, solely to prevent their disbanding, had been suggested, Houston appointing Bowie to lead the expedition. But this was not what Grant wanted. The council was with Grant, and a regular campaign had been planned.

Houston had been ordered to move his headquarters to Washington, but did not dare to leave the council until he had done his best to organize and to place troops and provisions at proper points. On December 25 he moved to Washington, where he found volunteer companies from the States, all very much disgusted with the condition of civil affairs. He writes the governor: "I had great difficulty in getting them

to volunteer for any definite period. . . . To-day there has been an arrival in six days from San Antonio, which reports all quiet, but no discipline."

The day after Houston removed his headquarters the council appointed him commissioner to treat with the Indians. At the same time he was criticised for not being at the front. He explained to the governor the necessity of his "occupying, until the campaign opened, a central position." But on this very day, while Houston was showing his movements to be necessary, and in the direction of order and discipline, Grant with two hundred volunteers, with all that they could take from public stores and private property,— with everything, in fact, except authority,— began the march from Bexar to Matamoras. Colonel Johnson next applied to the council to do likewise; and this body acceded to the request, as "the expedition under Grant would need support."

Strange to say, the old fatal dream of the "South-western Empire" was once more blinding men. Alliance with the Mexicans,—an empire of East Mexico and Texas! It was the cause of this expedition. It was in the eyes of the council, of the peace party behind the council, of Grant, Fannin, Johnson. Their idea was to disown the provisional government, to put this expedition under the orders of independent officers, and so show the Mexicans that they were confident of Mexican co-operation.

On January 6 Houston sent to the governor the report of Colonel Neill, at Bexar, as to the destitute condition in which the place had been left by Grant. Houston writes: "Manly and bold decision alone can save us from ruin. . . . The wounded and sick have been left destitute, . . . by self-created officers, who do not acknowledge the only government known to Texas. . . . Within thirty hours I shall set out for the army.

. . . No language can express my anguish of soul. . . . Send supplies to the wounded, the naked, the sick, and the hungry, for God's sake!"

On the 7th Johnson, having gone to San Felipe to have Grant's expedition legalized, declined to join forces with Fannin, who had been appointed by the council "agent to raise and collect any volunteers willing to go to Matamoras," with full powers in every direction. Johnson, also getting general powers, returned to Grant; and they issued a proclamation calling on "all who wished to keep the war out of Texas" to join them.

On the 9th Governor Smith, receiving Houston's letter enclosing Neill's report, sent a message to the council, denouncing their course, and declaring them adjourned. The council promptly returned the message, declaring the governor deposed. The governor retained the archives, and the council did what

more was possible to block the efforts of the governor and of Houston.

Houston reached Goliad on the night of January 14. Everything was in confusion; and the troops, discontented for want of food, made difficulties about obeying orders and concentrating at Refugio. On the 17th Houston received a message from Colonel Neill, at Bexar, that the enemy was reported approaching in force. He hurried Bowie with thirty men to San Antonio, with orders to Neill to level the fortifications and bring away the guns. Houston wrote to the governor: "Bowie will leave in a few hours for Bexar; . . . and, if you should think well of it, I will remove all the cannon and other munitions of war to Gonzales and Copano, blow up the Alamo, and abandon the place. It will be impossible to keep up the station with volunteers. The sooner I can be so authorized, the better it will be for the country. In an hour I will take

up the line of march for Refugio, with a force of about two hundred and nine effective men, where I will await orders from your excellency. I do not believe that an army of such small force should advance upon Matamoras, with a hope or belief that the Mexicans will co-operate with us. I have no confidence in them. . . . Do forward the regulars. . . . I have sent to Captain Dimit to raise one hundred men and repair to Bexar, if it should be invested. . . . Captain Patton will do likewise. I would myself have marched with a force to Bexar, but the Matamoras fever rages so high that I must see Colonel Ward's men. You can have no idea of the difficulties. . . . Better materials never were in ranks. The government and all its officers had been misrepresented to the army."

At Refugio, Houston found further disorder. News travelled slowly; and Houston in Washington, ordered there

by the council, had not realized the full iniquity of that council until Colonel Johnson showed him his authority to command the Matamoras expedition, and told him also of the wide powers granted to Fannin. At the same time Houston heard of the adjourning of the council by the governor, and the deposition of the governor by the council. Neither had the power to destroy the other; but, as the council had practically superseded him, putting several commanders-in-chief in the field, and not being willing to bear responsibility where he had no authority, there seemed to be but one course for Houston to pursue. He returned to Washington, and reported fully to Governor Smith; and the governor decided: "Your absence is permitted by the illegal acts of the council. . . . In the mean time you will conform to your instructions, and treat with the Indians."

Colonel Neill now reported that his

garrison at Bexar had dwindled to eighty men, that he had no teams to move the artillery, therefore he had not destroyed the fortifications, and asked to be relieved. The governor at once removed young Travis from his recruiting station, causing more confusion, and sent him to Bexar; and Travis wrote to Houston for five hundred men. He also asked for money, provisions, and clothes. But too many had been allowed to appropriate from the country's slender store for Houston to be able to grant the righteous demands of Travis.

IV.

In Mexico, meanwhile, the country had been unified by the fall of Bexar, and by the proclamation of Dr. Grant which had reached the government. Santa Anna, first sending General Urrea to Matamoras, had determined himself to lead the invading army, and set out from Saltillo February 1, with six thousand troops.

It was nearly "the rise of grass"; and, of those in Texas who had any conception of organization or military tactics, Austin had gone as agent to the United States, Bowie and Travis were shut up in Bexar, and Houston was detailed to treat with the Indians. The Matamoras expedition had lingered because of private dissension, then because of the force of Urrea which had reached Matamoras. At this time Fannin, under orders from the council, was at Goliad; Johnson was at San Patricio;

and Grant, with the volunteers from Bexar, was raiding the country. The governor and council were still at war.

On February 18 Urrea set out from Matamoras with more than six hundred men in search of Grant and Johnson. On the 22d Santa Anna appeared before Bexar. The quick descent was unexpected; and the garrison retreated to the Mission of the Alamo, Lieutenant Dickenson picking up his wife and child on the way, and carrying them in with him on his horse. Santa Anna demanded the surrender of the mission. Travis replied with a cannon-shot. Santa Anna ran up the "blood-red flag of no quarter," and the siege was begun.

On the 23d Travis sent to Fannin for aid. The letter reached Fannin on the 25th, and on the 28th he set out for Bexar. In a little distance a wagon broke down. They were short of teams and of provisions, and it was decided to give up the attempt. On the 24th

Travis sent off a courier with an appeal "to the people of Texas, and all Americans in the world," — a brave appeal, ending: "Though this call may be neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible, and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country. Victory or death!

"W. BARRETT TRAVIS,

"*Lieutenant Colonel Commanding.*

"P.S. — The Lord is on our side. When the army appeared in sight, we had not three bushels of corn. We have since found in deserted houses eighty or ninety bushels, and got into the walls twenty or thirty beeves."

This letter was indorsed on the back by the couriers who forwarded it: —

"Since the above was written, I heard a very heavy cannonade during the whole day. Think there must have been an

attack on the Alamo. We were short of ammunition when I left. Hurry all you can forth. When I left, there were but one hundred and fifty men determined to do or die. To-morrow I leave for Bexar with what men I can get. Almonte is there. The troops are commanded by General Sesma. Albert Martin."

"I hope that every one will Rendevez at Gonzales as soon Possible, as the Brave soldiers are suffering; don not forget the powder is very scarce, and should not be delad one moment. L. Smithers."

In answer to this, thirty-two men from Gonzales, under Captain J. W. Smith, made their way into the Alamo at daylight on March 1. On the 3d Travis sent out his last appeal: "I am still here in fine spirits and well-to-do. With one-hundred and forty-five men I have held the place against a force variously estimated from fifteen hundred to

six thousand; and I shall continue to hold it until I get relief from my countrymen, or I will perish in its defence. . . . Again I feel confident that the determined spirit and desperate courage heretofore exhibited by my men will not fail them in the last struggle. . . . The victory will cost that enemy so dear that it will be worse than a defeat. . . . A blood-red flag waves from the church of Bexar, and in the camp above us. . . . The war is one of vengeance against rebels. . . . God and Texas! Victory or death!"

On this same day J. B. Bonham, who had gone to ask aid of Fannin, returned and made his way into the Alamo.

In Washington on the Brazos, on March 1, the convention met to make a Declaration of Independence and a Constitution for the Republic of Texas. The dispute between the governor and the council was ignored, and the invasion received immediate attention. On

March 2 Houston, who had returned from a successful mission to the Indians, and had been elected to the convention from Refugio, issued an appeal to the people: —

"CONVENTION HALL, WASHINGTON,
March 2, 1836.

"War is raging on the frontiers. Bexar is besieged by two thousand of the enemy. . . . Re-enforcements are on the march to unite with the besieging army. By the last report our force at Bexar was only one hundred and fifty men. The citizens of Texas must rally to the aid of our army, or it will perish. . . . Independence is declared. It must be maintained. Immediate action, united with valor, can alone achieve our great work. The services of all are forthwith required in the field.

"SAM HOUSTON,

"*Commander-in-chief of the Army.*

"P.S.— It is rumored that the enemy

is on the march to Gonzales. . . . The fate of Bexar is unknown." . . .

Down at San Patricio on this day the commands of Grant and Johnson had been defeated and slaughtered by Urrea, only five men escaping.

On the 4th Houston was unanimously elected commander-in-chief of the republic, as he had been of the provisional government. The organization of the militia received prompt attention. Republican constitution, president, vice-president, two houses of Congress, and a government *ad interim* were provided, as the constitution had to be submitted to the people. David Burnet was elected president of the provisional government. On Sunday, March 6, Travis's last appeal of the 3d was received, and read to the convention. The excitement was intense, and a demand was made that the whole convention should march to the Alamo. Houston stopped this wild

move. A handful of men against Santa Anna's army! It would be madness. The convention must complete its work. He himself set out for Gonzales.

From Gonzales on the 11th Houston wrote to Fannin:—

"On my arrival here this afternoon the following intelligence was received through a Mexican supposed to be friendly: . . . that the Alamo was attacked on Sunday morning at dawn of day, by about two thousand men, and carried a short time before sunrise. . . . I have little doubt but that the Alamo has fallen. You are therefore referred to the enclosed order.

"I am, sir, &c.,

"SAM HOUSTON.

"P. S.—In corroboration of the truth of the fall of the Alamo, I have ascertained that Colonel Travis intended firing signal guns at three different periods each day until succor should

arrive. No signal guns have been heard since Sunday, though a scouting party has just returned who approached within twelve miles of it, and remained there forty-eight hours."

Santa Anna assaulted the Alamo at four o'clock on the morning of Sunday, March 6. The troops, numbering twenty-five hundred, completely surrounded the Mission, bringing with them scaling-ladders, crowbars, and axes, the cavalry forming a cordon in the rear of the infantry to prevent retreat or escape. In the ghastly hour that is neither night nor day the charge was sounded; and the Mexicans, dashing forward, were received with a deadly fire by the little garrison that had been watching and fighting since February 23. On three sides the attack failed. The columns were concentrated on the north side. Once more they recoiled; but on the third charge they scaled the walls, and reached the convent yard, driving the Ameri-

cans into the hospital and convent. Every inch of ground was fought for. Bonham and Travis fell before the last struggle in the church. Crockett met death at the door, with his long rifle, "Betsy," held like a club in his hands. Bowie, disabled by a fall, and doing deadly work from his cot, was killed by a shot through the crack of the door. "A wounded man fled into the room where was Mrs. Dickenson with her baby. The Mexicans killed him, raising his body on their bayonets, 'like a bundle of fodder.'" Mrs. Dickenson, her baby, two Mexican women, and a negro boy belonging to Travis were the only survivors of the massacre. After the slaughter the bodies of the Americans were burned, but about them lay five hundred and twenty-one dead Mexicans.

There is a monument in Texas to the heroes of the Alamo,— young Travis and his men,— and below is written,—

"Thermopylæ had her messenger of defeat: the Alamo had none."

V.

Up to this point, Burleson and Neill had been making every effort to raise troops for the relief of Travis; and it was Houston's intention to combine these forces with those of Fannin, and march to Bexar, and he so ordered "in advance of his arrival at Gonzales." But here he met the dreadful news, listened to the Mexican deserter, and wrote the dire tidings to Fannin, enclosing orders to blow up the defences, bring away the women and children, sink in the river such artillery as he could not move, and fall back on Victoria. The immediate advance of the enemy was expected, "as well as a rise of water. Prompt movements are therefore highly important."

A panic of dreadful grief and fear swept over the town's people. The last body of men to enter the Alamo had gone from Gonzales; and, as in old Egypt, the Angel of Death had touched almost

every door. The women cried aloud, the men in groups spoke in gloomy whispers. It was no time for hesitation. Houston arrested the messenger as a spy, thus restoring a little order until he could organize the few troops at hand, and sent out Deaf Smith, Karnes, and Handy to go as near as possible to Bexar, and report to him again in three days. He reported to the government: "March 13 I found upward of three hundred men in camp, without organization. . . . Since then the force has increased to more than four hundred. . . . The enclosed order to Colonel Fannin will indicate to you my convictions that . . . we cannot maintain sieges. . . . The force under my command here was such as to preclude the idea of meeting the enemy. . . . The projected expedition to Matamoras has already cost us over two hundred and thirty-seven lives; and where the effects are to end none can foresee. Dr. Grant's party, as well as

Colonel Johnson, have been murdered. . . . Dr. Grant surrendered, and was *tied* by the enemy."

The three scouts met Mrs. Dickenson. Alone on horseback, with her child in her arms, she had been despatched by Santa Anna, bearing an insulting proclamation to the Texans. Out of a thicket crept Travis's negro servant, and walked beside her horse. Meeting the scouts, she confirmed the horrible news and accentuated the particulars, warning them that the march to Gonzales had begun. Karnes was put on the best horse in the party, and posted back. His news caused the panic Houston had tried to avert,—a panic that almost reached the point of a stampede. There was no mercy to be looked for from Santa Anna; and he was advancing! Men, women, and children, a hurrying crowd, demanded retreat; and on horses and on foot the tragic, weeping caravan began its march across

the prairie at night, in the rain. Houston's force, already small, was further diminished by men going away to bring in their families from exposed places; and there was nothing to do but to conduct the people to some point where Fannin could join him. There were two government wagons; but a single one brought away all the ammunition and supplies of the army! Spies were left to watch the enemy and to burn the town, and the Texans were lighted for many miles on their journey by the flames of their homes.

On the 15th Houston reported his retreat to the government. "Other important intelligence arrived that the army of Santa Anna . . . was to proceed direct to Gonzales. The number of the enemy . . . was represented as exceeding two thousand infantry. Upon this statement . . . I deemed it proper to fall back . . . on the Colorado. . . . My morning report . . . showed three hun-

dred and seventy-four effective men, without two days' provisions, many without arms, and others without ammunition. . . . Detached as we were, without supplies, . . . ammunition, or artillery, and remote from succor, it would have been madness to hazard a contest. . . . If starved out and the camp broken up, there was no hope for the future. By falling back, Texas can rally. . . . I hope to reach the Colorado on the morrow, and collect an army in a short time. I sent . . . to Columbia this morning for munitions and supplies to be sent me immediately, and to order the troops at Velasco to join me. . . . Our forces must not be shut up in forts where they can neither be supplied with men nor provisions. Long aware of this fact, I directed on the 16th of January last that the artillery should be removed and the Alamo blown up; but it was prevented by the expedition upon Matamoras, the author of all our misfortunes.

. . . Enclosed you will receive the address of General Santa Anna, sent by a negro to the citizens. . . . Santa Anna was in Bexar when the Alamo was taken. His force . . . is, I think, only five or six thousand. . . . Had it not been for the council, we would have had no reverses. . . . Gonzales is reduced to ashes!"

Fannin's men at Goliad were chiefly volunteers from the States,—Georgia troops under Ward and King, the New Orleans and Mobile "Greys," the Kentucky "Mustangs," Tennesseeans under Captain Bradford, the "Red Rovers," and other companies from Alabama. Houston's order to fall back reached Fannin on March 14. He immediately sent a courier for Ward and King. He sent out for teams also, and began to dismount his guns. He had sent King to rescue helpless women and children ahead of Urrea's advance, and Ward to rescue King; and now he waited for them. Dead and stripped, King and his

men lay on the prairie, the food of beasts and birds.

At last, on the 19th, Fannin began his retreat, but only so fast as oxen could travel. Urrea had had plenty of time; and, before the first day's march was over, Fannin and his men were surrounded in the open prairie, and without water. They made breastworks of wagons, and fought until night,—the battle of Coleta. The next day they surrendered, "prisoners of war, according to the usages of the most civilized nations," and were marched back to Goliad. On the 21st Ward surrendered, reaching Goliad on the 25th. By the evening of the 26th they were all there, relying on the promises of the Mexican officials that they would be paroled and returned to the United States.

There was a flute in the company, and they were singing "Home, Sweet Home." That night a courier "ex-

traordinary" came from Santa Anna. Services of four American physicians were to be retained. At day-dawn on March 27, being Palm Sunday, the prisoners were marched out in three detachments under three different excuses. They were going to be sent home, they were going to slaughter beeves, they were going to make room in the fort for Santa Anna! Dr. Shackelford was in the tent of Colonel Garay; "In about an hour we heard the report of a volley of small arms toward the river, and to the east of the fort. . . . In about fifteen minutes thereafter, another such volley was fired, directly south of us, and in front. At the same time I could distinguish the heads of some of the men through the boughs of some peach-trees, and could hear their screams." . . .

As the divisions reached their different places of execution, they were ordered to sit down with their backs to the guards. One incident: a young

fellow sprang up, crying: "Boys, they are going to kill us! Die with your faces to them, like men!" Another: two fellows waved their caps, and cried, "Hurrah for Texas!" Some tried to escape, but were cut down by the cavalry or shot. In all about twenty-seven got away. "For an hour after the first firing, the ring of intermittent shots smote on the ear, producing on the listener's mind a terrible picture of the flight and chase." The wounded who had been brought in from the battle were murdered where they were. Colonel Fannin was the last. He begged to be shot in the breast, and to be decently buried. He seated himself in the chair, and tied the handkerchief over his own eyes. He was shot in the head; and, like the rest of the dead, his body was stripped; the pile — three hundred and thirty — was covered with brush that Sunday morning at Goliad, and set on fire.

Goliad was an old town, dating far back into a Spanish past; and its original name had been "Espiritu Santo." ..

VI.

Santa Anna, now sure that Texas was conquered, divided his force into columns to occupy the country: Gaona, north to Nacogdoches; Sesma, to follow to San Felipe; Filisola, to drive the colonists out of the south.

As it has been expressed, "the whole country was fleeing east,"—"many carts and wagons with lone families and three or four men with them": men who should have been with Houston crawled across the prairies like black ants. Houston was retreating slowly and warily, and wondering about Fannin. On the 17th he writes: "If you can by any means soothe the people and get them to remain, they shall have notice. . . . I shall raise a company of spies to-morrow, to range the country from this to Gonzales. Send all the good horses you can get."

The new government blundered, tell-

ing the people to be quiet, while moving to Harrisburg. Houston marched down the east bank of the Colorado to Beason's Crossing, notice having been sent to all families west to cross to the east. On the 20th Karnes, capturing a Mexican, discovered that Sesma with the main body of the army was near the west bank of the river. Houston wrote on the 23d: "I am not easily depressed; but before my God, since we parted, I have found the darkest hours of my life. My excitement has been so great that for forty-eight hours I have not eaten an ounce, nor have I slept. I was in constant apprehension of a rout: a constant panic existed in the lines. . . . All would have been well . . . if I could only have had a moment to start an express in advance of the deserters. . . . This moment an express . . . states that Fannin took up his retreat on Saturday last, and a few miles from Goliad was attacked by the

Mexican army. . . . The result is not known. . . . Colonel Ward's command had not returned. I am at a loss to know how matters stand. . . . The retreat of the government will have a bad effect on the troops. . . . How this news will affect them I know not."

It was the intention of Houston to cross the Colorado on the night of the 27th and fight Sesma, but on the 25th there came the news of the defeat of Fannin and Ward. Afraid of a panic, Houston put the messenger under arrest as a possible spy; but he knew that the news was true, and that any demonstration on his part, even a victory, would only serve to draw down on himself the whole Mexican force which Fannin's capture had left at liberty to move in any direction. The fate of the country hung on his few men: he must wait to strike until he could strike a vital blow. It was a dreary retreat. The rains were heavy, the army was de-

pressed, men demanding furloughs to go for their families, men walking off. Sullenness, ill-temper, threats of mutiny, but Houston held them together. He was patient, he was tireless, he worked at any task,—a mired wagon, a stalled team, anything to push them on and to prevent discouragement. Swearing, laughing, joking, gathering up refugees, sending out scouts, allaying distress, the intrepid leader toiled on, reaching San Felipe on the west bank of the Brazos on March 28. From here he proceeded up the river to Mill Creek. It rained all night: there were no tents. "Houston spent the night sitting on his saddle with a blanket over him, and his feet on a piece of wood." But he loyally wrote "Headquarters"! "On my arrival on the Brazos, had I consulted the wishes of all, I should have been like the ass between two stacks of hay. . . . I consulted none. . . . If I err, the blame is mine. . . . For Heaven's

sake, don't drop back again with the seat of government!" On the 31st the army reached Groce's Landing, where Houston seized the steamboat "Yellowstone," in case of need. The next day they moved camp to the Brazos bottom. The rains continued, the river rose until the army was on an island; and here, with few tents and scant food, they remained until April 12. There were some stores in San Felipe; but the detachment there mistook a herd of cattle for Mexicans, and burned the town.

From Groce's Landing, Houston writes: "This is the best and nearest route to Harrisburg or the Bay, . . . and will prevent the whole country passing the Trinity. . . . The re-enforcements promised to our army never arriving has kept us in a mood not so enviable as could be wished for. . . . Do let me know what to rely on. I must let the camp know something, and I want everything promised to be realized by them. I hope I

can keep them together. I have thus far succeeded beyond my hopes." Vice-President Zavalla and Secretary of War Rusk now joined the army.

Santa Anna, with the whole population fleeing before him, felt no hesitation in pushing on, even though the haste scattered his forces. All the rivers were up. Filisola was at the Guadaloupe, and Sesma had put only a part of his army across the Colorado, when Santa Anna, with his staff, reached that point. Here he left General Woll to cross the artillery and forces of the belated Filisola, himself hastening on to San Felipe, where he arrived on April 7. Through the spies the news came as fast as horses to Houston, and he issued an order to the army.

"The advance of the enemy is at San Felipe. The moment for which we have waited . . . is fast approaching. The victims of the Alamo and . . . Goliad call for cool, deliberate vengeance. . . . The

army will be in readiness at a moment's warning."

The country was in the greatest confusion and distress. The secretary of the navy writes: "Never till I reached Trinity have I desponded,—I will not say despaired. If Houston has retreated or been whipped, nothing can save the people from themselves. . . . He must be advised of the state of the waters, and the impossibility of the people crossing."

Santa Anna had failed to cross the Brazos at San Felipe, the crossing being held, and went down the river to Fort Bend, where Major Martin, with forty men, was on guard. Martin wrote to Houston on the 8th: "Two men arrived from toward San Felipe. . . . Enemy must be by this time in that town in full force. . . . One division . . . has passed above, . . . pointing for Nacogdoches . . . other column below, aiming for Matagorda." On the 12th the Mexicans

crossed below Fort Bend, causing Martin to retreat. On the same day Houston, who had been on the west side of the Brazos, crossed over, being sure, though he had not yet heard it, that the Mexicans had crossed.

All East Texas was now threatened. On the 13th the acting secretary of war wrote to Houston: "There is nothing to stop the march to this place [Harrisburg] or Galveston in twenty-four hours. . . . You have assured the government that the enemy should never cross the Brazos, . . . but they find your pledges not verified. . . . The time has now arrived when we are to determine whether we are to give up the country." Houston stopped in the midst of the hurry and confusion to answer: "Taunts and suggestions have been gratuitously tendered me. . . . At Gonzales I had three hundred and seventy-four men, without supplies, even powder, balls, or arms. At Colorado, with seven

hundred men without discipline or time to organize. . . . Two days since my effective force was five hundred and twenty-three men." "The Texan army," in the words of Yoakum, "was a hasty collection of farmers, paid and fed upon promises, poorly armed, and with every variety of weapon, and up to this time without a piece of artillery. Add to this that their wives and children were homeless wanderers, flying without food or shelter, . . . and we must admire the sagacity and address that kept so many of them together so long."

On the east side of the Brazos the detached troops, and the only artillery, two six-pounders, "The Twin Sisters," from Cincinnati, joined Houston. But no ammunition coming with the cannon, it had to be supplied by breaking up old horseshoes and bits of iron, and tying them up in bags. In his report, Houston, always loyal, referred to this as "grape and canister." Houston could

strike but once, and had reserved himself for that blow. The vital spot would be where Santa Anna was. But now the time had come when, wisely or not, he had to strike. A column to the north, a column to the south, a column crossing just below him at Fort Bend; and where was Santa Anna?

In his complete security, Santa Anna had fatally scattered his army. Gaona and his column were lost in the unknown country. Urrea had gone south, and the high waters and dreadful rains were hampering every move. He left Sesma to cross the army at Fort Bend, himself pushing on with seven hundred men to Harrisburg, which he reached on the 15th. The town was deserted save for two men, who told him that Burnet and his cabinet had left for Galveston Island. Santa Anna burned the town, and marched rapidly to New Washington, where Burnet was so nearly caught as to be under fire. From this

point, Santa Anna ordered Cos to join him by forced marches. The Mexicans were now south of Houston; between him and Galveston Bay,—the devil and the deep sea! On the 15th Houston, in his turn, set out to make a forced march to Harrisburg on Buffalo Bayou. The streams were at flood; and the prairies, wet and filled with quicksands, were sloughs of despond. At Harrisburg they paused to rest; and Deaf Smith brought in two prisoners, one bearing letters. It was dusk, and by torchlight Houston read despatches addressed to Santa Anna! The Mexican butcher was in the army just ahead of him.

On the morning of the 19th the troops were drawn up, and Houston addressed them. "The army will cross, and we will meet the enemy. Some of us may be killed, and must be killed. But, soldiers, remember the Alamo! the Alamo! the Alamo!" Rusk tried to speak, but stopped: his voice failed him.

"I've done!" he said. They crossed the brimming bayou on rafts, the commander working on one side, the secretary of war on the other. The sick were left with a guard. Then began a swift march along the south bank of the bayou until they fell down for weariness. A halt was called, and for two hours they rested. At dawn on the 20th they pushed on, meeting scouts who reported that Santa Anna would that day march from New Washington up along San Jacinto Bay to where the San Jacinto River and Buffalo Bayou flowed into the bay at Lynch's Ferry, where he would cross to Anahuac, thence to Galveston, and in the persons of the president and cabinet destroy the Texan government.

About breakfast-time, scouts reported that the enemy was approaching Lynch's Ferry. An advance of forty men found as many Mexicans there, who fled at the approach of the Texans.

Running parallel with the bayou was a rise of ground; and between this and the bayou, in a skirt of timber, the Texans had camped. Beyond the rise were two small clusters of timber, beyond this the prairie. On the 20th there was skirmishing, but evening found the Texans resting. The Mexicans — with the San Jacinto marshes in their rear, San Jacinto Bay on the right, Vince's Bayou on the left, the open prairie and Houston in front — were building a flimsy breastwork of saddles and baggage, as Fannin had done. And in the executive mansion, in the capital of the United States, old Andrew Jackson sat pondering, with the map of Texas before him. His finger had followed the retreat, as far as he knew it, of the man who had been his pupil. The finger went on to San Jacinto, and paused. "Here's the place," he said. "If Sam Houston's worth one bawbee, he'll stand here, and give 'em a fight."

VII.

THURSDAY, April 21, dawned clear. Houston had watched that night, but toward morning had fallen asleep. About nine o'clock a large body of Mexicans were seen marching from the direction of Vince's bridge. Houston, awakened, at once suggested a doubt. This was a portion of Santa Anna's army marched round behind a rise in the prairie to deceive the Texans. Then he called Deaf Smith aside, telling him to select a companion and to stay within the lines.

The anxious officers demanded a council of war, which Houston granted. Should they attack the enemy or await his attack? Opinion was divided. It was now Deaf Smith's turn, and Houston gave him his secret orders. He was to take axes, which had been provided, and destroy Vince's bridge, the only escape for either army.

A little after three o'clock Houston formed his line behind the rise of ground, and explained his plan of battle. The solitary fife of the Texan army struck up "Will you come to the bower I have shaded for you?" and, in the broad light of day, those wild, ragged, starved phantoms deployed in the open prairie without shelter, and advanced in good order. Smith, riding up, reported the bridge destroyed. It was announced to the men. The advance quickened to a run. Houston, on a gaunt gray horse, tore up and down, waving his hat, and yelling curses on the men to make them hold their fire. "The Twin Sisters" were wheeled and fired, the line paused to deliver one deadly volley, then "Remember the Alamo!" "Remember Goliad!" and the Texans sprang forward on their long-desired prey.

On that far-spent day, Santa Anna had given up all thought of battle, and was asleep in his tent. Cos had arrived by

forced marches, and his men were tired. The rest of the army were cutting wood, cooking, watering horses, when the Texans emerged from their "bower." There was the wildest confusion, the most dreadful dismay, orders to fire, orders to lie down. They had only time to give one feeble volley before death was on them. Clubbed rifles and bowie-knives, whose originator had been murdered in the Alamo, made cruelly short work with the struggling mass. Many pleaded, "Me no Alamo, me no Alamo!" But it was not the day of mercy. Houston was striking,—striking vitally. In fifteen short minutes the Mexican army was running across the prairie or sinking in the marshes, with the Texans in pursuit. Santa Anna seized a horse and fled. Almonté stuck to his post, rallied a few hundred, and surrendered. Houston's ankle was broken, and his horse wounded in the charge; but he remained on the field

until his horse fell under him. The pursuit lasted until dark.

The Texan army numbered seven hundred and forty men. Six were killed, and twenty-five wounded. Six hundred and thirty Mexicans were killed, two hundred wounded, and more than seven hundred were taken prisoners. Santa Anna was captured the next day by James Sylvester. Having in his flight done away with his uniform, he declared himself a private soldier, and he came into camp riding behind one of the soldiers. Sylvester did not know whom he had captured until the Mexican prisoners murmured in awed tones, "El Presidente!" Houston, suffering with his wound, and sleeping under a tree, was wakened, and raised on his elbow to find the Mexican general, a little pale man, in dirty linen trousers, a blue cotton jacket, and red worsted slippers, standing before him.

Santa Anna said, "I am General An-

tonio Lopez de Santa Anna, a prisoner of war, at your service." Houston waved his hand. Santa Anna sat down on a tool-chest, and Almonté was sent for as interpreter. The Texans drew near; and Santa Anna, trembling, almost crying, begged for opium, after which he was able to control himself. He now demanded to be treated as a prisoner of war, and to have his release arranged for immediately.

"That man who has conquered the Napoleon of the West," said the little person in the woollen slippers, "is born to no common destiny. He should now be generous to the vanquished."

Houston answered, "There was no generosity at the Alamo."

"That was taken by assault."

"And the men who surrendered under Fannin?"

"Urrea told me that Fannin had been vanquished, and my government had ordered that every rebel taken armed should be shot."

"You are yourself the government."

"I have the orders of Congress," Santa Anna declared. "Urrea deceived me. He had no right to make terms with Fannin; and, when I am free, he shall suffer."

Houston listened, then said that the power to make terms belonged to the Texan government. An armistice was agreed to, and Deaf Smith was sent with orders to the Mexican generals to retire. Santa Anna was then allowed to have his own tent, servants, and baggage, which had not been touched. Houston also had him guarded from the indignant Texans, who were talking angrily of immediate execution.

At Galveston Island, so great was the panic, that boats were loaded with refugees ready to sail, when the astounding news came that Houston had captured Santa Anna and his whole army, and desired the presence of the officials to negotiate terms. Houston's

suggestions for these terms were: recognition by Mexico of Texan independence, the Rio Grande as boundary, indemnity for Texan losses, immediate withdrawal of all Mexican troops, cessation of hostilities, retention of Santa Anna and his officers until Mexico ratified the treaty. He also suggested that envoys be sent to the United States to secure mediation between Texas and Mexico.

Because of his wound, Houston went to New Orleans, Rusk taking command of the army and M. B. Lamar becoming secretary of war. Houston arrived in New Orleans on May 11, with his wound in bad condition. His welcome was most enthusiastic. Many pieces of bone were taken from his ankle, and his recovery was slow. As soon as possible, however, he returned to Texas, arriving at San Augustine on July 5.

VIII.

In the thirty years from Burr to Houston the majority in the United States had been converted to the idea of "extending the area of freedom," and now looked with desire not only on the thousands of square miles of Texas, but across the continent out to the far Pacific. The talk of annexation was open and earnest; and the important victory of San Jacinto excited others besides the old little man in New York, whose magnetic eyes could yet blaze over the success of the thing he had failed to do. Public meetings were held in various cities, and a commissioner was sent to Texas.

Texas was to Houston as his own child. He had saved her. His love for her was deep, and his pride in and for her was sensitive. As a State, she would be enormous; as an independent country, without allies, without money,

with a powerful enemy on the south, a wilderness and savages on the west, on the south-east a coast that offered a safe harbor to a hostile fleet,—Houston felt that the new born republic was small, and her position an anxious one. Added to this, she was young and headstrong, with a population rendered almost unmanageable by the influx of adventurers during the revolution. But he was as patient and persistent in peace as he had been in war. If the wagon of State mired, he put his shoulder to the muddy wheel. If the political team balked, he laid his hand on the patched bridle. If his annexation artillery lacked ammunition, he tied up England and France in bags, and shot them into the United States Senate as "grape and canister." Keeping always a brave front to the world, he made no sign of defeat. He was too strong not to make enemies, and had too much power to fear opposition. He had great humor and much elo-

quence; and the known recklessness of his masterful, passionate temper made people careful. He was too shrewd, however, not to know how and when to control his temper, which made it all the more dangerous when he did let it go; and nothing attests more his position in Texas than that he declined to fight duels. Nor would he flatter the people. However he praised his Texas to the world, to her face he told her what he thought. He would laugh in the presence of the most furious mobs, and abuse and ridicule them. Those who would follow he attached to himself with the strongest personal bonds. Those who opposed, he satirized and ridiculed ruthlessly. He remembered an affront as carefully as he did a kindness, and never failed to return either. His strongest hold over the people, however, was his love for them. They knew it, had faith in it, and returned it.

"His sly jokes," says Mr. Forney,

"his winning ways, his roving habits, his battles, his escapades, and his love for the Union are still food for fireside gossip. . . . In his broad-brimmed sombrero, his large cane, his ruffles and his rings, his lofty air, and extra politeness to men and women, even his vanity was a study; and nobody complained of it."

So much has been said of Houston's vanity that it is pleasant to find an English traveller in Texas, Mrs. M. C. Houston, saying, "Never have I seen a man who had 'done' not alone 'the State,' but the cause of humanity such 'good service in his day,' who was so simple and unobtrusive in his manner, and who seemed to think so little of himself."

Sitting in front of a shop, or walking, to any it would be: "How d'ye do, colonel? How's madam? Bad weather for the ladies." Another says: "He generally abstained from much talking. No man could better be silent

when he wished to be." Further, we are told that "he carried his liquor with dignity," and seldom to any excess after his second marriage.

And now he would require all his powers. Texas was in a state of mild anarchy. Putting aside the treaty, the army had detained Santa Anna, and now demanded him for court-martial. Houston sent a sharp protest, and Santa Anna "embraced the bearer as one who had saved his life." A general election being ordered to replace the provisional government, the people put aside the regular candidates, Smith and Austin, and in mass meetings demanded Houston. Even his inauguration was pushed forward, so that he was installed October 22, ahead of time. He appointed his presidential competitors to places in his cabinet, and at once sent ministers to England, France, and the United States.

Santa Anna was to be saved once more. Houston saw the forlorn little

prisoner, who wept on the breast of his big captor; arranged that he be invited by President Jackson to Washington; overruled the Texas Congress, and forwarded the troublesome person.

There were army, navy, judiciary, to be supported, and an empty treasury: bonds were issued to the amount of $5,000,000; a loan was to be made in the United States; and import duties fixed. In May, 1837, Congress reassembling, Houston was able to say to them that Texas had been recognized as an independent republic; that England was friendly, and France had sent a commissioner. Mexico was still hostile; but Texas was confident. They must legislate as for a permanent system. The army he could not praise. It had become a menace, and he had furloughed it. Congress voted for annexation, and a special agent was sent to Washington.

There the question was an exciting one. The debate was angry, the objec-

tion was strenuous. This really would be the addition to the South which had been feared in the Louisiana purchase. Texas threatened to be three or four States, with a great increase of Southern representation; and, instead of "extending the area of freedom," it would extend the area of slavery. Everything that had ever been said against the people of Texas was revived. From Sam Houston, and, through him, Andrew Jackson, down to the smallest boy in the territory, all were filibusters, all were combined in a vast intrigue that would bring untold trouble and expense on the United States; and Van Buren declined annexation.

Texas refused, the request for annexation was withdrawn; and Houston said, Lower your import duties, make commerce easy to France and England, and the United States must reflect, and "legislate as for a permanent system." Texas must be able to stand alone before

she could command respect. The loan, which later had to be abandoned, had not been negotiated; and there was no demand for Texas land. The government was so poor that the public officers had no salaries, and Houston had to give his personal note in order to obtain public supplies. In spite of this, he vetoed the issue of promissory notes for $1,000,000, as half that amount was all that could be kept at par. "The record of Texas finances," Mr. Williams says, "was a creditable one; and it was Houston's firm hand and sagacious judgment . . . which kept down the indebtedness, and enabled the government to carry out its operations without collapse."

Not eligible for succeeding terms, Houston had to stand aside, and, free to travel, visited the United States to some purpose. In May, 1840, in Alabama he married Miss Margaret Moffett Lea, who at last gave to his wandering days a home and happiness. In Texas the

contest for the second term in the presidency was violent. Of the three candidates, one was drowned, the second committed suicide, the third, M. B. Lamar, was inaugurated December, 1838. The first term had been for two years. After this the term would be three years, so that Lamar would be in until 1841. And Houston, a member of Congress, saw his policy reversed,—saw once more the dream of the "South-western Empire" rise, and the effort made to annex New Mexico by sending a peaceful but carefully armed expedition to Santa Fé.

Lamar's opposition to annexation fell in with Houston's policy at that moment; but, "sitting on a back bench, whittling," Houston so effectively ridiculed the whole plan of the expedition that, though they marched, Congress did not bear the expense. Do what he would, however, things went from bad to worse, until Lamar retired, sick, and Congress threatened to adjourn perma-

nently. A speech of Houston's stopped this; and in December, 1841, he was re-elected president as the only man who could save the country. He sent a stinging message to Congress, where he had many opponents, then set about doing all his work over again. Summing up the late administration, he showed that the Mexicans were still enemies, the Indians had been turned into enemies, the treasury was empty, the debt quadrupled, the fate of the Santa Fé expedition unknown, and "we are not only without money, but without credit, and, for want of punctuality, without character." He reduced his own and all other salaries one-half, useless offices he abolished, and all claims he postponed. To a claimant he said, "If it would do you any good, colonel, I'd give you half my present fortune: but my only possessions are a stud horse, eating his head off in the stable, and a solitary game-cock, without a hen to lay an egg."

IX.

In the United States, annexation was arrayed chiefly on slavery and anti-slavery lines; and leaders who in earlier days had been eager for it were now against it. Though with some of these men slavery would weigh certainly, and with others possibly, it is hard not to believe that with some Andrew Jackson weighed also. France and England, who were willing to befriend Texas if she remained independent, opposed annexation. Houston prophesied that, if annexation were finally defeated by factions, "a rival power will soon be built up, and the Pacific as well as the Atlantic will be component parts of Texas in thirty years from this date. . . . All the powers which either envy or fear the United States would use all reasonable exertions to build us up as the only rival power that can ever exist on this continent." He further declared that

the Californias and New Mexico — in fact, all that was finally brought in by the Mexican War — would be a part of this country of Texas; ending, "They must come: it is impossible to look on the map of North America, and not perceive the rationale of the project." At home his policy was: Texas must keep peace with Mexico, so silencing the cry of Mexican War; must keep the friendship of England and France, so causing jealousy in the United States. "So delicate and hazardous was the situation," says Mr. Brown, "he could scarcely take his whole Congress into his fullest confidence, lest, by some hasty action or speech, publicity might betray the necessary coquetry of Texas with these three jealous powers."

And at this inauspicious moment, January, 1842, the bad news came from Santa Fé. The expedition was looked on as invasion by Mexico, and had been captured. It was maddening; and, in the excitement, Congress passed an act,

extending the boundaries of Texas to include "two-thirds of the territory of Mexico, with two millions of her inhabitants," revealing the object of the peaceful expedition. Houston vetoed it as a "legislative jest." It was passed over his veto, and, as he warned them, seriously affected all diplomatic relations.

Santa Anna, now realizing that peace would forward annexation, sent in March an expedition against San Antonio. This was just as Houston, all things seeming favorable, had renewed the proposition for annexation; and he, seeing through Santa Anna's policy, forbade pursuit of the Mexican army, who after two days' plundering had retired. But Texas flew to arms, demanding invasion of Mexico. An extra session of Congress was called. Houston explained the enormous cost of such an expedition, and the poverty of the country. As answer, Congress voted

him head of the army with unlimited powers, and ten million acres of land for expenses. Houston vetoed the bill. The people were furious, his enemies declaring his veto "Indian cunning," —he had made the people offer him dictative powers, that he might decline them; and assassination was threatened.

A larger expedition coming to San Antonio in the autumn, the people again demanded invasion. Houston sent an army. The Mexicans retreated. The Texans demanded to follow; and, from the strange, wandering route which the commander pursued, it is shrewdly suspected that the president had ordered the earliest possible dissipation of the war ardor.

The latest application for annexation had been refused; and in 1843 Houston ordered the Texan minister to withdraw it absolutely, as Texas now felt herself safe in the friendliness of the European powers. Mexico now declared

openly that annexation would be considered a declaration of war. President Tyler begged Houston to renew the application. Houston hesitated. Would the United States protect Texas during negotiations? The answer was, "The majority of the Senate were in favor of the treaty." Houston asked the same question of the United States agent in Texas, who answered that no interference would be permitted. Houston sent a secret message to the Texan Congress, explaining, and asking for appropriation to send a special agent to Washington; and J. Pinkney Henderson was sent.

In February, 1844, Houston wrote to Andrew Jackson: "Now, my venerated friend, . . Texas is presented to the United States as a bride adorned for her espousal. But if, now so confident of the union, she should be rejected, her mortification would be indescribable. Were she now to be spurned, . . . she

would seek some other friend. . . . She could not ponder long. . . . To postpone it to make a President, . . . let them beware." A Presidential election was pending in the United States. The two applicants for nomination, Clay and Van Buren, both opposed annexation; and they had influence enough to cause the treaty to be rejected. Texas heard the news with "inexpressible chagrin," Mexico with joy and threats.

For the moment Texas was without a friend, England and France having protested against annexation. To private assurances of the inevitableness of annexation, Houston answered, "Texas is free from all involvements and pledges; and her future course, I trust, will be marked by a proper regard for her true interests. My decided opinion is that she should maintain her present position, and act aside from every consideration but that of her own nationality."

The Texas minister was recalled from

Washington ; and England and France at once made a proposition that, on Texas pledging herself not to unite with any other nation, the powers would compel Mexico to keep the peace. This roused the United States. Van Buren was dropped by the Democratic party, Clay was once more defeated, and Polk elected on the cry of Texas.

Houston's term ended December, 1844. He could not again be elected ; but the people elected his candidate, Anson Jones. Houston, setting out on a journey, "came into my room," wrote Ashbel Smith, "booted, spurred, whip in hand. Said he, 'Saxe Weimar [his horse] is at the door, saddled. I have come to leave Houston's last words with you. If the Congress of the United States shall not by the 4th of March pass some measure of annexation which Texas can with honor accede to, Houston will take the stump against annexation for all time to come.' Without another word, embracing after his fashion, he left."

Houston's rigid economy and absolute honesty rendered Texas solvent. He had not only paid his own way, but had paid the debts of the preceding administration. In his last speech as president, he once more advised that they legislate as for a permanent system. Houston has been accused of being a filibuster to annex Texas, then of having been "bought by British gold" to stand against annexation. He could see both visions; and his patron, Andrew Jackson, had heard at first hand the dream of Aaron Burr. Houston was too practical, however, to follow dreams, though at the last he was not quite sure that the United States would be the best home for Texas.

The joint resolution for the annexation passed the House in February, 1845, and the Senate on March 1; and on the same day Tyler affixed his signature. In Texas a convention was called for July 4, to decide the issue. On June 2

the British *chargé* in Texas presented preliminary articles signed by Mexico, acknowledging Texan independence if she would abjure annexation. On June 4 a proclamation was issued that Texas now had the choice of guaranteed independence or of becoming a State of the American Union. The convention decided for annexation; and on December 22, 1845, the Republic of Texas ceased to exist.

One of the first acts of the Texas legislature was to elect Houston and Rusk senators, putting on record that, knowing all, they pinned their faith to "Old Sam Jacinto." His advent to the Senate of the United States caused much comment. An eye-witness, Mr. Dyer, describes him: "He was large of frame, of stately carriage and dignified demeanor, and had a lion-like countenance, capable of expressing the fiercest passions. . . . The conspicuous features of his dress were a military cap and

a short military cloak of fine blue broadcloth with a blood-red lining. Afterwards I occasionally met him, when he wore a vast and picturesque sombrero and a Mexican blanket. . . . [In the Senate] he would sit and whittle, and at the same time keep up a muttering of discontent at the long-winded speakers, whom he would sometimes curse for their intolerable verbosity. . . . He had a chivalrous regard for women. . . . It was a matter of common jocose remark that, if 'Old Sam Jacinto should ever become President, he'd have a cabinet of women.' General Houston impressed me as a lonely, melancholy man." All this whittling was making toys, still preserved, for his own and other people's children.

He allied himself with the old Union Democracy of Jackson, and held extreme views as to incorporating Mexican territory, longing by some method to divert the lightning of the slavery storm. He

voted for the compromise of 1850, opposed violently in 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska bill doing away with the Missouri Compromise. "Abrogate or disannul it," he said, "and you exasperate the public mind. . . . My word for it, we shall realize scenes of agitation which are rumbling in the distance now. . . . Sir, if this repeal takes place, I will have seen the commencement of this agitation ; but the youngest child now born, I am apprehensive, will not live to witness its termination." Houston was always the friend of the Indian, and his utterances on this subject are worth reading. In 1856 there was talk of Houston for the Presidency, but it was not seriously considered. His great sorrow was the widening gulf between the North and the South. He said : "Let the gentlemen of the North cease to agitate the subject of our Southern institutions. They are ours, they were theirs. . . . Will you throw our slaves back

again into barbarism, or will you turn them loose on the South? . . . Slavery has descended to us." . . . His opposition to the extreme Southern party brought down on him much harsh criticism, and lost for him the election as governor of Texas in 1857. The old man wanted it, but only as taking him home. Under promise to his wife, he went every Sunday to the Baptist church, wearing his blanket and whittling through the whole service, making afterward a careful summary of the sermon and sending it to her. At last a sermon on the text, "Better is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city," finished his conversion; but he waited until he got home to make his public profession.

X.

SUPERSEDED in the Senate by a secessionist, Houston found himself called to lead the Union party in Texas. He was nominated for governor by acclamation. The old war-horse sniffed the battle from afar; and then followed a campaign that must have delighted his heart,—once more with the breadth of the prairies all about him, once more leading a forlorn hope among his own people. Great questions were at stake, great principles involved. His people's hearts were burning with a sense of injustice intended; and he was called upon, as never before, to exert all his powers to keep them still until they had time to consider. He canvassed the State from end to end, carrying everything before him. "Two things would always bring out the Texas people, a circus and Sam Houston." And now party combinations, newspapers, public

men, were swept out of sight by his impromptu eloquence, his caustic, contemptuous invective. Of a personal follower who had forsaken him he said: "Don't be too hard on him. I was always fond of dogs, and he has all the virtues of a dog except his fidelity." Senator Wigfall, who followed him about in this campaign, he called always "Wigtail," which pleased the people wonderfully. He turned the Union minority into a triumphant majority, which elected him; and nothing could have proved more clearly a man's power than to have been elected Union governor of an excited Southern State in secession times. He was inaugurated in December, 1859, and found himself facing the storm he had prophesied.

In 1860 there were four tickets in the Presidential field, conflicting and confusing. The excitement in Texas was increased by the burning of barns, towns, cotton-gins, and mills, believed to be

instigated by Abolition emissaries among the negroes. The people were alarmed and angry; and meeting after meeting was held, for and against secession. In September, Houston got out of a sick-bed, to address a Union mass meeting in Austin. "I come not here to speak in behalf of a united South against Lincoln," he said. "I would rather appeal to the great soul of the nation than to the passions of a section. . . . The error has been that the South has met sectionalism by sectionalism. . . . But, if through a division in the ranks of those opposed to Mr. Lincoln he should be elected, we have no excuse for dissolving the Union. The Union is worth more than Mr. Lincoln; and, if the battle is to be fought for the Constitution, let us fight it in the Union and for the sake of the Union. . . . If Mr. Lincoln administers the government in accordance with the Constitution, our rights must be respected. If he does not, the Constitution provides a remedy."

He strove with all his power against secession, and in Virginia it was demanded that the traitor Houston be tarred and feathered, while in Georgia it was suggested, "Some Texan Brutus may arise to rid his country of this old, hoary-headed traitor."

Lincoln's election was the signal for secession; and Houston at once called an extra session of the legislature January 21. The lieutenant governor, however, called a convention to meet on the 28th, the legislature passing an act recognizing the secession convention as representing the people. Houston vetoed the act, the retort being an ordinance of secession. A "Declaration of the Causes of Secession" was sent out. A committee of safety secured the United States posts and arms; and on February 4 the convention adjourned to meet again on March 2, the twenty-fifth anniversary of Texan independence, the day on which the ordinance of secession was

to take effect, if ratified, and Houston's birthday.

The vote stood almost three to one for secession. A committee was sent to tell the governor that by the will of the people Texas was again "a free sovereign and independent State," and the 16th the day appointed for all State officers to take oath to the Confederate government or vacate their offices. "With two or three exceptions, every secessionist in that convention" wished Houston to remain in office. Mr. Williams tells us that, "when the day came to take the oath, the presiding officer of the convention called three times, 'Sam Houston, Sam Houston, Sam Houston!'" He did not answer, he did not come; and the lieutenant governor — as Houston expressed it, "the man who had ridden into office on his coat-tails — took his place." "The whole thing," says Mr. Brown, "was accomplished without the least apparent friction; and

a few days later Governor Houston retired with his family [wife and eight children] to his home in Independence." It has been said that Houston would have accepted armed aid to keep Texas in the Union. There is an official letter from Houston to the United States commander at Indianola. "Allow me most respectfully to decline any such assistance of the United States government, and to most earnestly protest against the concentration of troops in Texas, and request that you remove all such troops out of the State at the earliest day practicable."

To the people, Houston said: "I love Texas too well to bring civil strife and bloodshed upon her. To avert this calamity, I shall make no endeavor to maintain my authority as chief executive. . . . I protest . . . against all the acts of this convention, and declare them null and void. . . . Think not that I complain. . . . It is perhaps meet that

my career should close thus. I have seen the statesmen and patriots of my youth gathered to their fathers, and the government which they had reared rent in twain, and none like them left to reunite it. I stand almost the last of a race who learned from them the lesson of human freedom."

He refused a commission as major-general offered by President Lincoln. His "State, right or wrong." He loved his section, his people, and fitted out his son for the Confederate service, though, earlier in the excitement, he told his son that, instead of wearing his secession cockade over his heart, he should wear it on the inside of his coat-tail; and, when it came to a question of Federal coercion, he threw himself wholly on the side of the South. The loves of Houston's life were Texas and the Union. He had found Texas a home in the Union: he had carried the Union out to the Pacific. He had spent the

best years of his life in this work, had endured obloquy and physical suffering in the doing; and now, old and poor,—for, to his honor be it said, he had neither made nor saved one penny,—he was put aside to watch while his work was undone. He was still feared, however, and was accused of plotting with the Federal government, and also of meditating the rehabilitation of Texas as a republic; and the Governor of Texas wrote to President Davis to this effect. Times were dangerous, and more than once Houston's friends felt it necessary to arm themselves and be at hand when he was speaking during the secession excitement; but the old man had faced too many dangers to flinch now, and he spoke as fearlessly to the excited crowds that opposed him as ever he had spoken to admiring friends. It is hard to believe that any one in Texas would have raised a hand against him.

Martial law being established, an

official demanded Houston's pass. The old man answered "San Jacinto," and went on his way. His last speech was made in March, 1863. His ankle, broken at San Jacinto, had given way: the wounds from the battle of Horseshoe Bend, which had never healed, were troubling him; and he went on a crutch and a stick. "Ladies and fellow-citizens," he said, "with feelings of pleasure and friendly greeting I once more stand before this, an assemblage of my countrymen. As I behold this large assemblage, who from their homes and daily toil have come once again to greet the man who has so often known their kindness and affection, I can feel that even yet I hold a place in their high regard. . . . As you have gathered here to listen to the sentiments of my heart, knowing that the days draw nigh unto me when all thoughts of ambition and worldly pride gave place to the earnestness of age, I know you will bear with

me, while with calmness and without the fervor and eloquence of youth I express those sentiments which seem natural to my mind in the view of the condition of my country. I have been buffeted by the waves as I have been borne along time's ocean, until, shattered and worn, I approach the narrow isthmus which divides it from the sea of eternity beyond. Ere I step forward to journey through the pilgrimage of death, I would say that all my thoughts and all my hopes are with my country." . . .

When Vicksburg fell in July, 1863, Houston succumbed; and on the 26th of that month he died at Huntsville, Texas. He had said in 1860: "My sands of life are fast running out. As the glass becomes exhausted, if I can feel that I leave my country prosperous and united, I shall die content." But this was not granted him. He died having heard of the fall of Vicksburg, and he knew bet-

ter than most what that portended. He died leaving his eldest son wounded and a prisoner.

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